

CLAY, HENRY

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Abraham Lincoln's Political Career Through 1860

Henry Clay

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Ashland June 30th 1844

Dear Sir,

I regret that I can give you no information with respect to Samuel Hart, as requested in your letter of the 16th inst. I know nothing of the family of South Carolina Harts described in your letter. My wife's maiden name was Hart. Her father was Col. Thomas Hart who had two brothers, one named David, and the other named Nathaniel. Their residence was North Carolina near Hillsborough. During the revolutionary war Col. Thomas Hart removed to the state of Maryland, and about the year 1794 removed to Lexington in Kentucky where in 1799 I married my wife. If there be any connection between the family of Mrs Clay and that which forms the subject of your enquiry I am unaware of it.

I am respectfully

Yours Obedt^{ly} servt^t

H. Clay

James W. Bratton Esq

Ashland 1st Sept. 1848

Dear Sir

I received your letter, stating that in the prosecution of your researches in respect to Newtown, you discovered among the early records the name of Humphrey Clay; and enquiring if he were one of my ancestors.

I have no knowledge that he was; and his christian name being the first that I have ever heard being borne by a Clay, I am disposed to believe that he was unconnected with my family. But in truth, I know very little of my paternal Ancestors. I have understood, generally, that they were of English origin and established themselves in the Colony of Virginia.

With my acknowledgments for the friendly motive which prompted your enquiry, I am, respectf'ly

Your obe Serv

H. CLAY

Mr. James Riker, Junr.

WHAT IS ABOLITIONISM?—Henry Clay said, twenty years ago, of the Abolitionists:

"With them, the rights of property are nothing; the deficiency of the powers of the general government, is nothing; the acknowledged and incontestible powers of the States, are nothing; the dissolution of the Union, and the overthrow of a government in which are concentrated the hopes of the civilized world, are nothing. A single idea has taken possession of their minds, and onward they pursue it, overlooking all barriers, reckless and regardless of all consequences."

And Henry Clay told the truth.

— During Mr. Buchanan's administration, farmers received \$1.10 per bushel for their wheat. Now, under the republican administration of Mr. Lincoln, they receive \$1.60.—*Doylestown Intelligencer*.

During Mr. Buchanan's administration a dollar in paper was worth 100 cents, now it is worth about 72; a yard of shirt muslin was worth 10 cents, now it is worth 45; a poor girl could purchase a dress with one week's wages, now she must work a month to obtain the same article; a pound of coffee was worth 16 cents, now it is worth 53. The editors should have noticed the advance of these and many other articles brought about by the happy change of administration.—*Doylestown Democrat*.

Editor's Drawer.

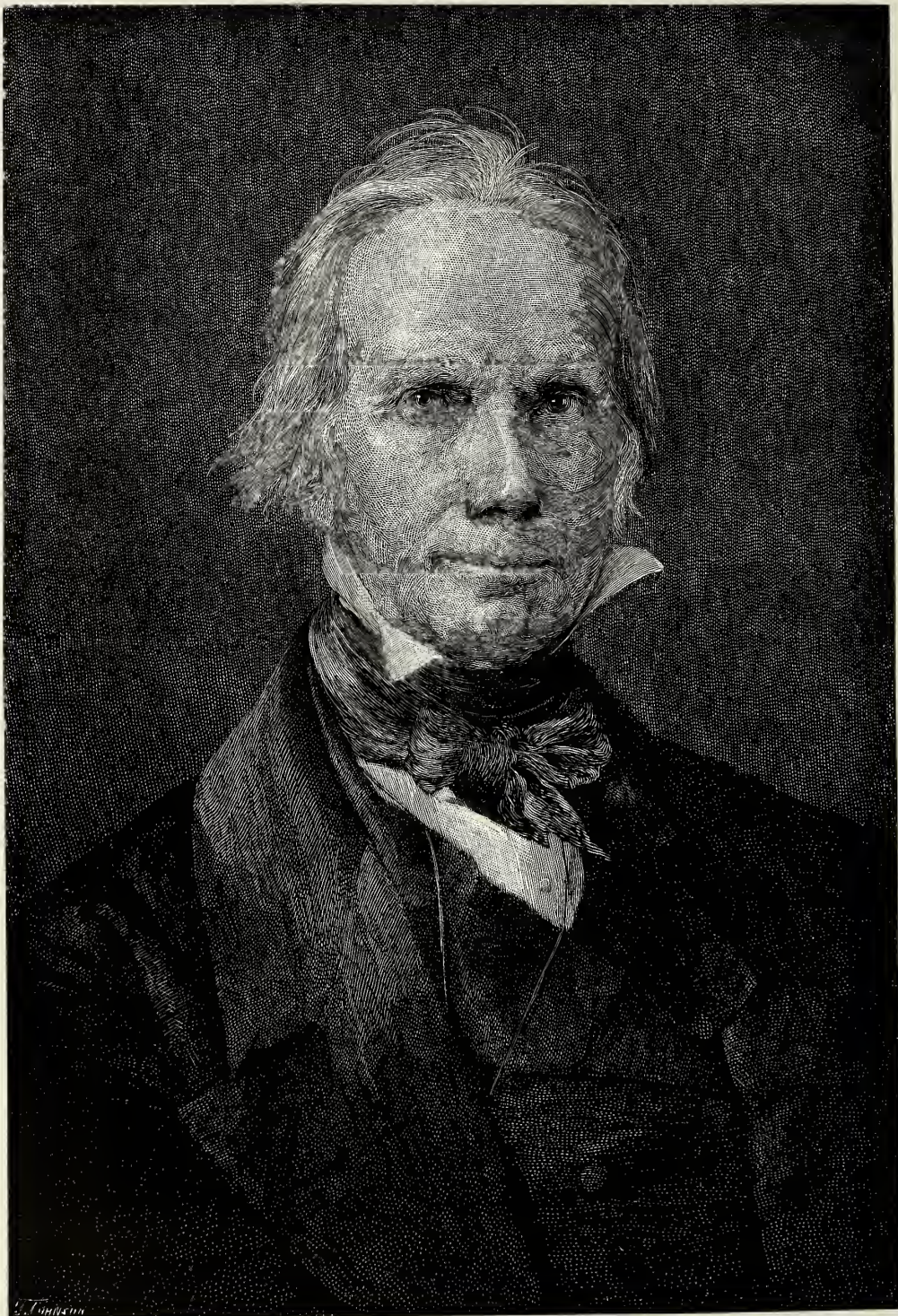
THE second month of the new year is as the first, and more abundant in good things. A correspondent in Mississippi, from whom we hope to hear many a time and oft, sends us some admirable reminiscences of Henry Clay and other men of mark. There are thousands of men in our country who have personal recollections of distinguished statesmen that should be gathered into such a reservoir as this. Read these, and send us more:

"WHEN Mr. Clay visited Hopkinsville, Kentucky, the first year of the administration of John Quincy Adams, to defend himself against the charge of 'bargain, intrigue, and corruption,' he was called upon by his friends at a large and spacious saloon. Dr. H—, then of that place, and a great friend of Mr. Clay, was by his side, presenting him to his numerous friends as they came forward. Presently the Doctor saw the tall form of the eccentric Governor Pittsur enter the door of the saloon. Instantly he embraced the opportunity to point him out to Mr. C., and then whispered to him that that tall man at the door 'is Governor Pittsur, of Pond River, a most worthy friend of yours, whom you must know without an introduction; and you must be certain, before he leaves, to wish that he may never have another invasion of squirrels.' Thus posted, Mr. Clay stood his ground in the centre of the saloon, while the Governor, unconscious of the innocent trick, approached him by degrees, and saying, as he came, 'Don't introduce me to Mr. Clay; he will know me, and I shall know him; for great men know each other on sight.'

"The Governor looked every where but in the right place; asking, as he passed on, 'Where is the godlike man?' and saying, 'I shall know him on sight; for great men like us never fail to know each other. I beg of you, gentlemen, not to introduce us; we will know each other, though we have never seen each other. You say he is in this room; good—I shall find him!' and away he stalked toward the place where Mr. Clay stood. Presently he drew himself up to his loftiest height upon beholding Mr. Clay, and eyed him for some time in unutterable admiration. Mr. Clay stepped forward with his blandest smile and sweetest voice, and exclaimed, 'How are you, Governor Pittsur, of Pond River? I am rejoiced to see you.' 'Hear that!' said the Governor; 'didn't I tell you that he would know me, and that Pittsur would know him? Yes, yes! gentlemen, he is the greatest man that lives!' After cordially shaking hands, and telling a few of his happy jokes, Mr. Clay said, 'My dear Governor, I wish that you may live a thousand years, that health may abound throughout your wide domain, and that you may never have another invasion of squirrels.' 'Bless me!' said the Governor, 'did you hear that? How did he know that my people lost their entire crop of corn last year by squirrels? Bless my soul, he knows every thing! Wonderful! wonderful! I always told you he was the greatest man in the world—didn't I, boys?' And the Governor left in a state of perfect admiration of the great statesman.

"ANOTHER: A new test of great men.—It is known that Mr. Clay was remarkable for his recollection of faces. A curious incident of this wonderful power is told of his visit to Jackson, Mississippi, in the year 18—. On his way the cars stopped at Clinton for a few moments, when an eccentric hut strong-minded old man made his way up to him, exclaiming, as he did so, 'Don't introduce me, for I want to see if Mr. Clay will know me!' 'Where did I know you?' said Mr. Clay. 'In Kentucky,' said the keen-sighted hut one-eyed old man. Mr. Clay struck his long bony finger upon his forehead, as if in deep thought. 'Have you lost that eye since I saw you, or had you lost it before?' inquired Mr. Clay. 'Since,' said the man. 'Then turn the sound side of your face to me that I may get your profile.' Mr. C. paused for a moment, his thoughts running back many years. 'I have it!' said he. 'Did not you give me a verdict, as juror, at Frankfort, Kentucky, in the great case of the United States vs. Innis, twenty-one years ago?' 'I did, I did!' said the overjoyed old man. 'And is not your name,' said Mr. Clay, 'Hardwicke?' 'It is, it is!' said Dr. Hardwicke, bursting into tears. 'Didn't I tell you, said he, to his friends, 'that he would know me, though I have not seen him from that time to this? Great men never forget faces.'

Harpers New Monthly
1860, v. 20



Engraved by T. Johnson.

From a daguerreotype by M. P. Simons.

HENRY CLAY.

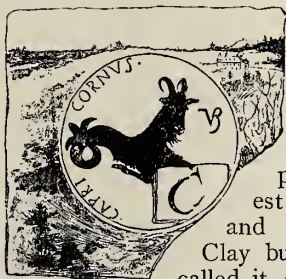
THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

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No. 2.

ASHLAND, THE HOME OF HENRY CLAY.



AMONG the rolling hills of the far-famed blue-grass region of Kentucky, in the midst of a park of fine old forest trees,—ash, oak, and walnut,—Henry Clay built his home and called it Ashland, from the number of trees of that species, and possibly, too, in tender memory of his boyhood home in Virginia, where the “Mill-boy of the Slashes,” the son of an impoverished preacher, first lived the life that he was to make so famous.

In 1797, Clay, then only twenty years of age, left the law office of Francis Brooke, Attorney-General of Virginia, and afterwards Governor, and went to Kentucky, to which State his mother, since her second marriage, had already removed. Lexington, at that time the most considerable town west of the Alleghanies, was the place chosen for location, and here he made his first speech before a debating society, electrifying his hearers, and giving a promise afterwards so brilliantly fulfilled. He soon, to use his own words, “rushed into a lucrative practice,” and was successively elected to the State Legislature and the Senate of the United States.

Thus successful, he was enabled to purchase early in the new century a tract of land a few miles south-east of Lexington, beautifully situated and very fertile. Here, about the year 1809, he erected a handsome brick dwelling-house, which ever afterwards remained to him a beloved retreat from the cares and fatigue of a most energetic public life. In the midst of the stirring scenes in which he was

so conspicuous an actor, his thoughts ever reverted tenderly to his country home and the delights of rural life; and in his private correspondence are found frequent allusions to farm matters—the expression of an eager desire to return to Ashland and devote himself to agricultural pursuits, to test some favorite theory of fertilization, to superintend the rearing of recently imported stock.

The situation selected for the house is a slight elevation, from which the blue-grass slopes stretch in gentle undulations down to the city, some two miles distant, and in full view. In the rear lies an extensive woodland, a remnant of the virgin forest, devoid of undergrowth. The mansion, as originally erected, consisted of a main building two stories and a half in height, flanked on either side by wings the full breadth of the house, though but a single story high, to which are attached L's, projecting to the front. The present mansion does not depart materially from the original plan. The general effect is odd, but not unpleasing; and the numerous gables and chimney-tops are delightfully suggestive of that hospitality for which Ashland has ever been renowned.

The interior arrangement of the house is peculiar, though singularly convenient and charming. The entrance is into a lofty octagonal hall, to the left of which is a small room used by Clay as an office. On the right is the staircase, and directly opposite the front entrance are doors leading into the drawing-room and dining-room, the two apartments connected by a wide, arched doorway. In the northern wing on each side are narrow halls running its entire length, between which is the library, a beautiful octagonal room with a dome ceiling, finished with panels of ash and walnut, and lighted from above. Beyond

the library are a billiard-room and sleeping apartments.

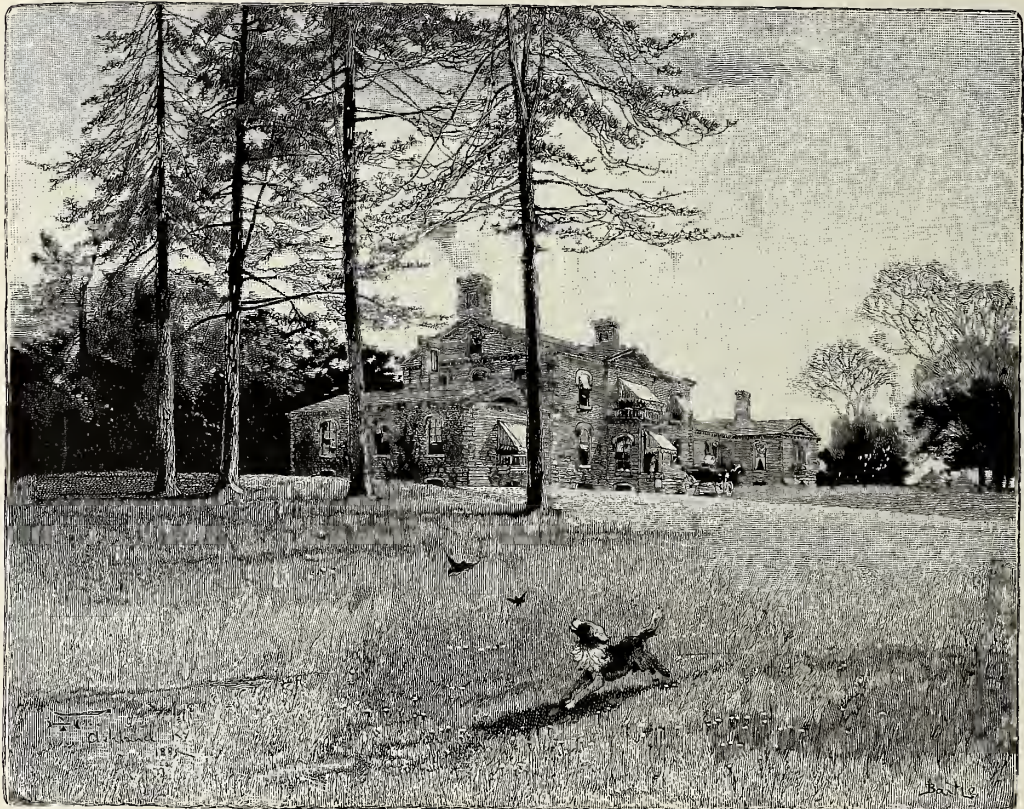
The entire woodwork of the interior is highly polished walnut and ash cut upon the place. In the billiard-room, drawing-room, and the hall behind the library, the windows open to the floor out upon a broad terrace of brick and stone; and in the dining-room and drawing-room, into a large conservatory, beyond which extends a richly turfed lawn, now laid out in a series of tennis courts. The southern extension of the house is devoted entirely to domestic uses.

After Clay's return from Europe, whither he had gone as commissioner plenipotentiary to the Council of Ghent, he bestowed much attention to beautifying the grounds about Ashland, putting into practical use observations made while abroad. His model seems to have been an English country-seat. Owing to the peculiar natural attractions of the place, the intervention of art was but slightly necessary. A park of superb forest trees, sloping lawns, sheeted with the luxuriant blue-grass, which retains its freshness and velvety softness throughout the winter, and a wide-reaching view of the surrounding country

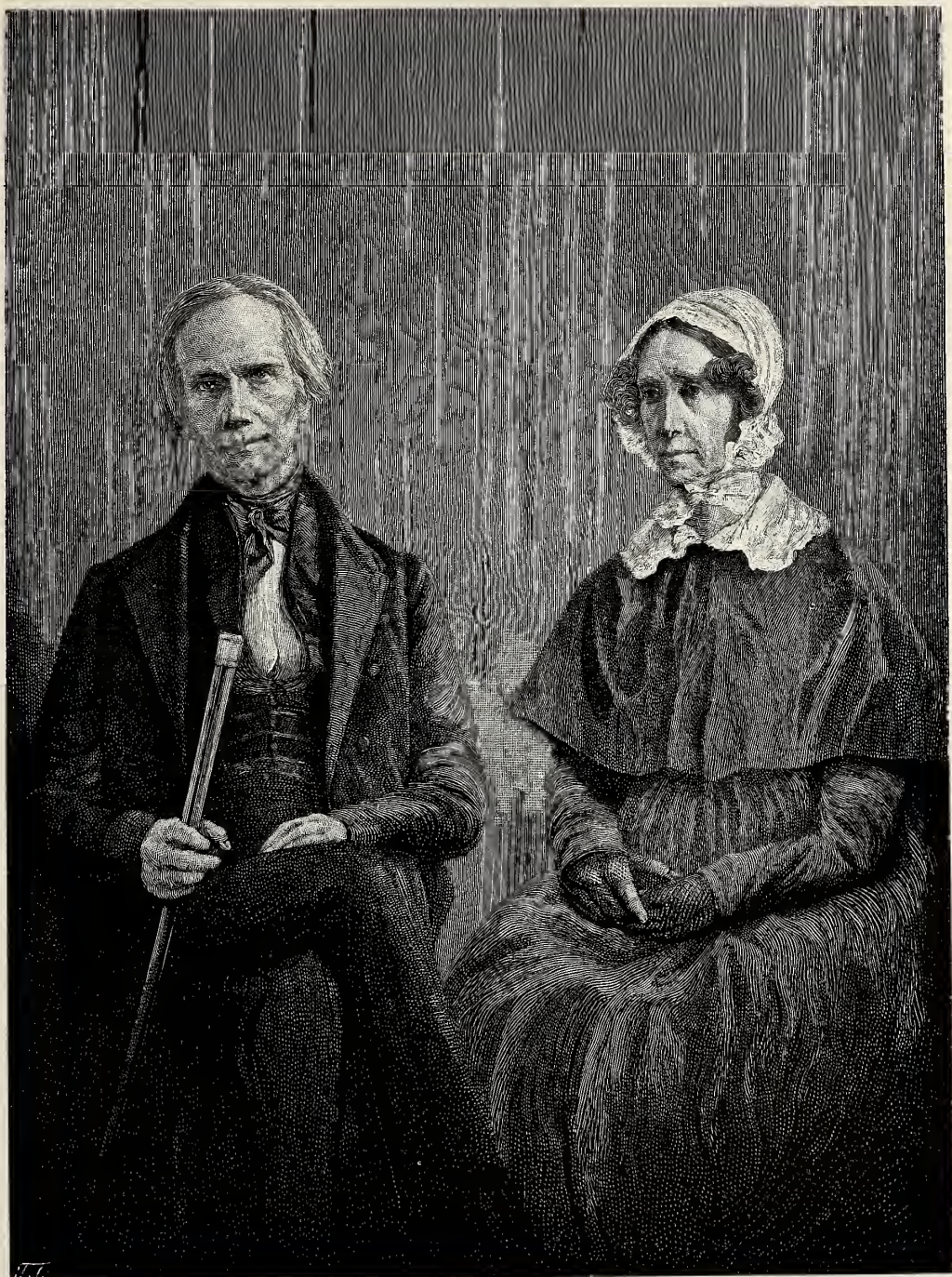
were supplied by nature; so that all remaining for the hand of man was to lay out the grounds and make use of the material so lavishly placed at his command. This was done with great taste and elegant simplicity. From the mountains were transplanted dogwoods, redbuds, pines, hollies, and other flowering and ornamental trees; and handsome shrubs, not indigenous to the country, were dotted about the lawns. Tan-bark walks were laid, heavily shaded by avenues of hemlocks, ashes, and walnuts, their delicate foliage interlacing overhead.

Clay's attendance upon Congress, necessitating long and frequent absences from Kentucky, rendered this work of improvement and adornment very gradual, as he delighted to give to it his personal supervision. But at the close of the session of 1821 he retired from Congress and resumed the practice of his profession, devoting much time to his private affairs, which had become impaired during his long public service. Two years later he returned to Congress.

At the close of Adams's administration Clay once more retired from public life to the shades of Ashland. In a letter to a friend he writes:



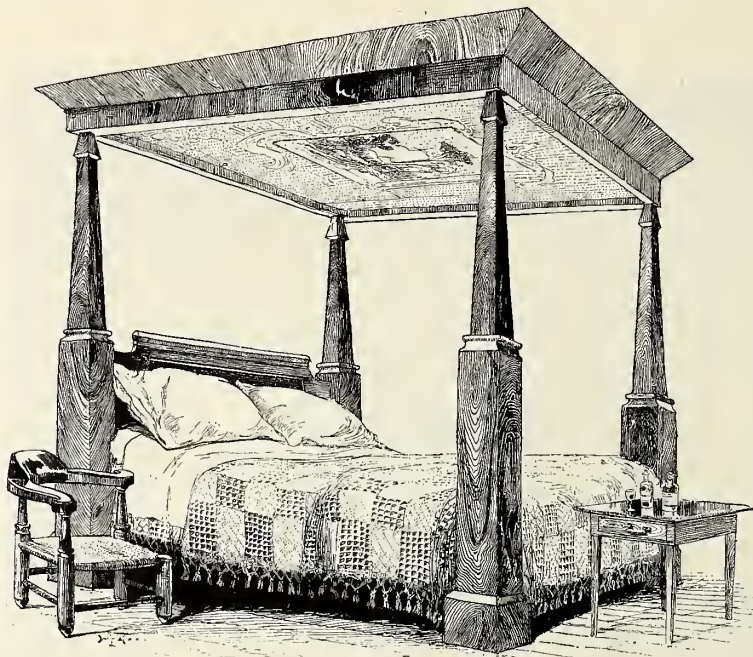
ASHLAND.



Engraved by T. Johnson.

After a photograph in possession of Louis E. Levy, Esq.

HENRY CLAY AND HIS WIFE.



HENRY CLAY'S BED, USED BY HIM FOR FIFTY YEARS.

"My journey has been marked by every token of warm attachment and cordial demonstrations. I never experienced more testimonials of respect and confidence, nor more enthusiasm. Dinners, suppers, balls, etc. I have had literally a free passage. Taverns, stages, toll-gates have been generally thrown open to me, free from all charge. Monarchs might be proud of the reception with which I have been everywhere honored."

Notwithstanding this expression of public sentiment towards him, he joyfully returned to his peaceful home and the rural life, to him so full of delights. A month later we find him writing to his old instructor, Governor Brooke:

"I have been much occupied, since my return, with repairs to my house, grounds, and farm. . . . I have not determined to return to the practice of my old profession, and nothing but necessity will compel me to put on the harness again."

Throughout the active correspondence with Governor Brooke, which is of the most intimate character, are found frequent allusions to this subject. April 19, 1830, he writes from Ashland:

"I assure you most sincerely that I feel myself more and more weaned from public affairs. My attachment to rural occupation every day acquires more strength, and if it continues to increase another year as it has the last, I shall be fully prepared to renounce forever the strifes of public life. My farm is in fine order, and my preparations for the crop of the present year are in advance of all my neighbors. I shall make a better farmer than a statesman. And I find in the business of cultivation, gardening, grazing, and the rearing of various descriptions of domestic animals, the most agreeable resources."

Again, a few days later, having been urged to make a political journey to the North, and feeling some desire to do so, he writes to the same gentleman:

"But I believe I shall resist it and remain in Kentucky, where (will you believe it?) I am likely to make an excellent farmer. I am almost tempted to believe that I have heretofore been altogether mistaken in my capacity, and that I have, though late, found out the vocation best suited to it."

Thus it is throughout his entire correspondence, though more particularly in this free, untrammelled intercourse with his beloved instructor. In the midst of the most heated discussions of

the stirring political questions of the day, when his fiery spirit is roused to the utmost, comes the same refrain in clear undertone: "I shall remain more than ever at Ashland, the occupations of which I relish more than ever."

Through this charming medium we catch glimpses of the domestic side of a great man's character, ever most interesting, for in it we trace the kinship of humanity.

In the autumn of 1831 he writes: "I am strongly urged to go to the Senate, and I am now considering whether I can subdue my repugnance to the service." After some hesitation, he finally obeyed the clamorous appeals of his constituents and the dictates of public duty, and in the following winter once more took his place in the councils of the nation, where he remained until the spring of 1842.

During this long period of political activity, a period fraught with questions and issues of the most exciting character, in his private correspondence we continue to read of his attachment to Ashland and the life of a farmer. "Since my return from Washington," he writes to Governor Brooke, May 30, 1833, "I have been principally occupied with the operations of my farm, which have more and more interest for me. There is a great difference, I think, between a farm employed in raising dead produce for market, and one which is applied, as mine is, to the rearing of all kinds of live stock. I have the Maltese ass, the

Arabian horse, the merino and Saxe merino sheep, the English Hereford and Durham cattle, the goat, the mule, and the hog. The progress of these animals from their infancy to maturity presents a constantly varying subject of interest, and I never go out of my house without meeting with some of them to engage agreeably my attention. Then our fine greensward, our natural parks, our beautiful undulating country, everywhere exhibiting combinations of grass and trees, or luxuriant crops, all conspire to render home delightful."

This inventory of live stock upon the Ashland farm renders it almost unnecessary to state that this region of Kentucky, despite its great fertility, is more eminently fitted for the rearing of live stock, owing to the native blue-grass covering its hills with a rich carpet of perpetual verdure. To this branch of agricultural employment Clay devoted himself, more especially during the intermissions of his public career. Among other importations was a very interesting Spanish ass, Don Manuel by name, shipped from Bordeaux in 1835 by Henry Clay, Jr. Don Manuel is represented as a very fine and handsome animal, and as gentle as a dog. His picture is still carefully preserved in the family. Young Clay while abroad also purchased for his father fine breeds of cattle and horses in England, and made an expedition to the Hautes-Pyrénées for the purpose of procuring more animals of that species to which Don Manuel belonged, a species of ass not generally known in America. Thus Ashland became one of the most finely stocked farms in the whole blue-grass district.

While paying special attention to stock-raising, Clay did not neglect the cultivation of the soil. Experiments in agriculture ever possessed interest for him, particularly in the way of fertilization. Hemp, in the production of which Kentucky stands foremost among the States of the Union, also received much of his care; and he wrote a pamphlet upon the subject of its cultivation.

"How did Mr. Clay rank among the farmers of the neighborhood?" inquired the present writer of an old gentleman who was Clay's intimate personal friend and his executor, though his political opponent.

"Oh, none ranked higher," was the instantaneous reply — "except his wife."

This estimable woman, during her husband's long and frequent absences at the seat of government, literally took the reins into her own hands, made a practical study of agriculture, oversaw the overseer, and became an oracle among the farmers of the vicinity. The garden and dairy, which enjoyed her special supervision, were made alone to meet the expenses

of the establishment. And a quaint, delightful spot it is, this old garden, where every spring the daffodils and snowdrops come up and blossom demurely in the first warm days, and the musk-roses flaunt their bright heads the summer long, quite as if they had not been superseded by daintier beauties years ago. It is also related of Mrs. Clay that preparatory to her husband's departure from home she invariably received from him a handsome check, which she as regularly restored to him upon his return, with the laconic remark that she had found no use for it.

At last, in the spring of 1842, Clay executed his long-cherished purpose of retiring from the public service to spend the remainder of his brilliant life amid the peaceful shades of Ashland. With this intention he resigned his seat in the Senate, and the voice of "the old man eloquent" sounded for the last time, as he thought, in the halls whose echoes had been so frequently awakened by its magic. But his devoted people, inconsiderate in their enthusiasm, would not resign him to the tranquillity of private life; and so, ten years later, broken in health, with the snows of three-score years and ten thick upon his brow, he went back to die amid the scenes of his former triumphs.

During the years of his retirement Ashland was, as indeed it had ever been, the shrine toward which many a pilgrim bent his steps. Its doors were thrown open with the most profuse though unostentatious hospitality. Every one went away as much impressed by the simplicity and elegance of the man as by his greatness. After dinner, guests were usually taken out to examine the fine stock, to see some newly imported animal or improved breed of cattle, or to note the result of agricultural experiments — all of which to him were replete with the keenest interest and enjoyment.

Many distinguished persons have been the recipients of the hospitality of Ashland. Lafayette, when in this country in 1824, paid his respects to its hospitable lord, between whom and himself an unbroken correspondence was maintained through many years. Harriet



HENRY CLAY'S INKSTAND.

Martineau also was a guest here, as were many other distinguished foreigners, among them being Lord Morpeth, His Excellency Baron de Maréchal, at one time Austrian Minister at Washington, and Count Bertrand.

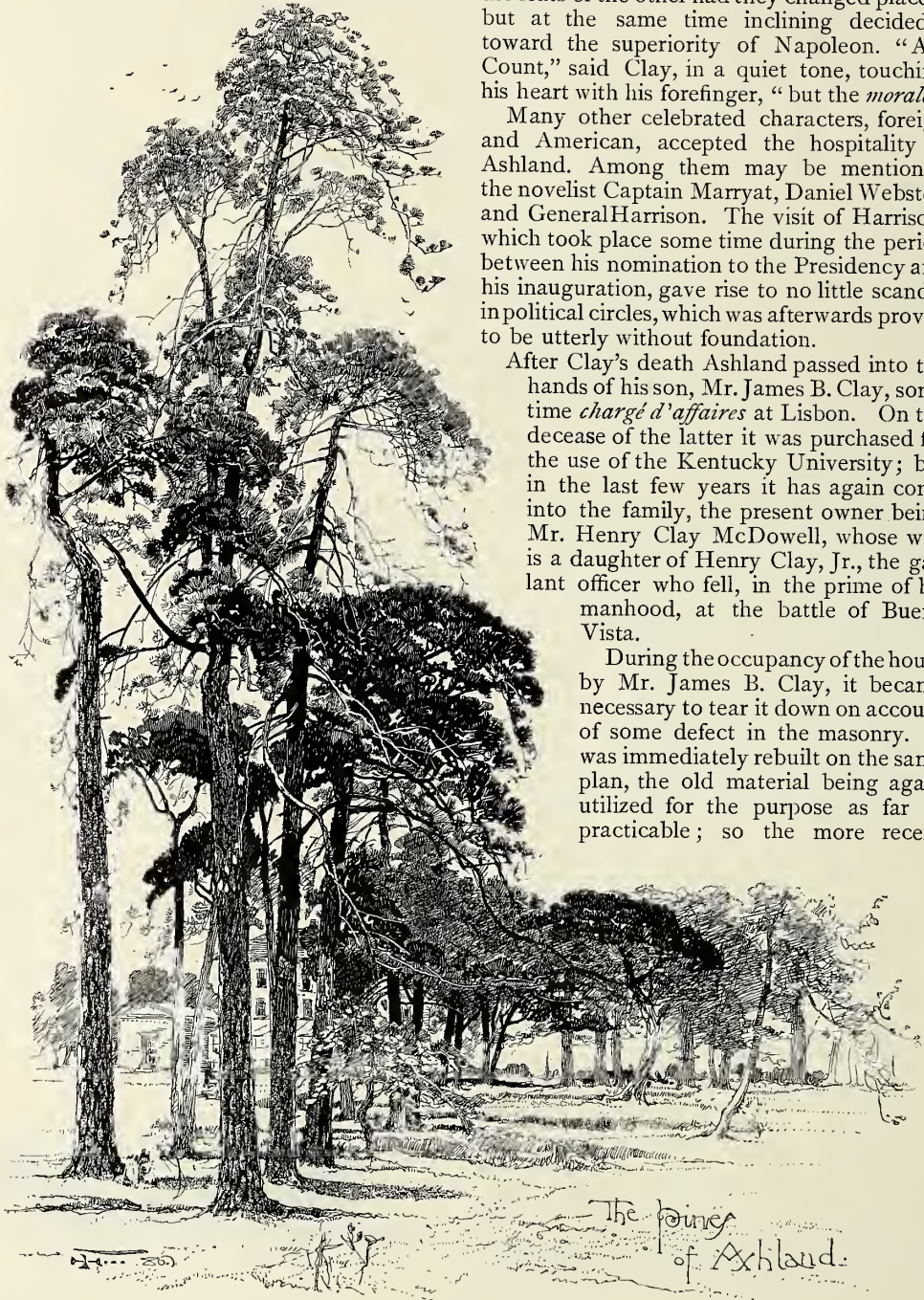
On the occasion of Count Bertrand's visit, while sitting at the dinner-table he noticed on

the wall an engraving depicting a domestic scene at Mount Vernon, in which Washington was represented as tracing his campaigns upon a map for the entertainment of his wife. Bertrand instantly instituted a comparison between the American general and Napoleon, saying that neither could have accomplished the feats of the other had they changed places; but at the same time inclining decidedly toward the superiority of Napoleon. "Ah, Count," said Clay, in a quiet tone, touching his heart with his forefinger, "but the *morale*."

Many other celebrated characters, foreign and American, accepted the hospitality of Ashland. Among them may be mentioned the novelist Captain Marryat, Daniel Webster, and General Harrison. The visit of Harrison, which took place some time during the period between his nomination to the Presidency and his inauguration, gave rise to no little scandal in political circles, which was afterwards proved to be utterly without foundation.

After Clay's death Ashland passed into the hands of his son, Mr. James B. Clay, some time *chargé d'affaires* at Lisbon. On the decease of the latter it was purchased for the use of the Kentucky University; but in the last few years it has again come into the family, the present owner being Mr. Henry Clay McDowell, whose wife is a daughter of Henry Clay, Jr., the gallant officer who fell, in the prime of his manhood, at the battle of Buena Vista.

During the occupancy of the house by Mr. James B. Clay, it became necessary to tear it down on account of some defect in the masonry. It was immediately rebuilt on the same plan, the old material being again utilized for the purpose as far as practicable; so the more recent



The Home
of Ashland.



THE PARK, ASHLAND.

mansion stands an almost exact counterpart of the original. The room formerly used by Clay as an office was restored in the minutest detail.

Since its reacquisition by the family, Ashland has once more taken on its pristine state. Old traditions are tenderly fostered, and the whole place is delightfully redolent of the great man, its founder. His favorite promenade, a serpentine walk wandering along beneath an avenue of pines and cedars, with here and there a redbud or dogwood, where he delighted to stroll in moments of reflection, has been preserved intact; and many other spots are pleasantly associated with his name. His portrait, made when he was a young man, by the celebrated Kentucky artist, Matthew Jouett, hangs in the hall, and another representing him in later life, done by a member of the family, adorns the wall of the drawing-room; while in the library is placed a bust taken from Hart's statue.

The present owner of Ashland has once more converted it into a farm for the rearing of blooded stock, and in its stables may be seen some of the finest trotters in the State. We saw the beautiful creatures as they came home from the fall trotting races, bearing their

blue ribbons along with them, and — but it may have been a fancy — they seemed to carry their graceful heads more proudly since they wore the badges of new victories.

From the front lawn is commanded a fine and extended view of the surrounding country, the domes and spires of the city standing out prominently against the sky, the whole prospect closed within a frame of branching walnut-trees. Slightly to the left of the picture rises a lofty column surmounted by a statue, the outline of which is scarcely visible. This is the Clay monument, erected to the memory of the great statesman by his admirers in the State of his adoption. In the base of the monument are placed two handsome marble sarcophagi, containing the remains of himself and his wife.

The great number of trees about the place, indigenous and exotic, evergreen and deciduous, illustrate Clay's fondness and taste for arboriculture. Lofty pines transplanted from the Kentucky mountains rear their heads majestically. Numerous chestnuts, cedars, hollies, and flowering dogwoods and redbuds, all brought from the mountains, and hemlocks, Norway spruces, larches, and catalpas, combine with the native ash and walnut in



WILLOW SPRING, IN THE PASTURE.

forming umbrageous avenues and small groves about the lawn, the air being fragrant with their resinous odors.

Ashland was indeed the picture of an ideal country-seat, as we saw it when the frost had come and, like a magician, transformed the summer green of its park into a mass of more gorgeous colors, while the crimson and yellow autumn leaves drifted down—perhaps a trifle sorrowfully, for all their brilliant hues—and lay glittering on the soft, blue-tinged sward beneath; and the sleek-coated trotters cropped the grass and formed themselves into

picturesque groups, in harmony with the warm, richly glowing October landscape.

From the neighboring turnpike—and let me say a word in praise of Kentucky highways—Ashland presents no other appearance than that of solid comfort and simple elegance; a place well kept up by people of culture and refinement. Its wide-reaching lawns and woodlands, all in perfect trim, its many gables, and chimney-tops, and outstretched wings, are pleasantly suggestive of that hospitality which has ever reigned within its doors.

Chas. W. Coleman, Jr.

HENRY CLAY.

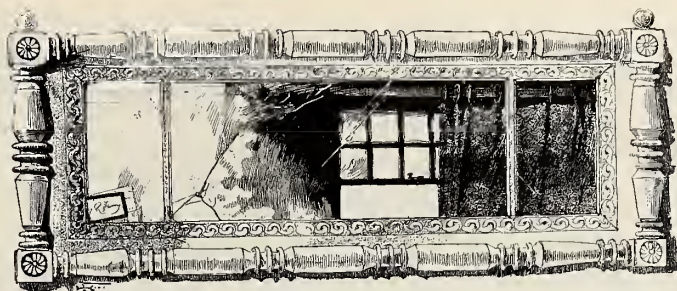
REMINISCENCES BY HIS EXECUTOR.*

IF it gives an old man any pleasure to recall even the trifles that were of interest to him when the world and its ways were new and

fresh to him, my descendants, I am sure, will not regret that I have here recorded some of them for their entertainment. I feel that I

* The following reminiscences of Henry Clay, by his only surviving executor, were written without any view to their publication, and were intended solely for the perusal of the author's descendants,—in the belief that it would interest them to know something of the confidential relations which existed between Mr. Clay

and the author. Especially it was the wish of the latter to convey to them the impression made upon him by his distinguished friend. It was with difficulty that we were able to convince Mr. Harrison that the world at large would place value upon these authentic and affectionate memorials.—THE EDITOR.



MIRROR FROM ASHLAND, NOW IN POSSESSION OF JOHN M. CLAY, ESQ.

can talk to them of trifles which I would not speak of to the outside world. My chief purpose is to give my recollections of my intercourse with Mr. Clay, which for some years before his death was very intimate and confidential, and exceedingly agreeable to me, and also to give the impressions he made upon me.

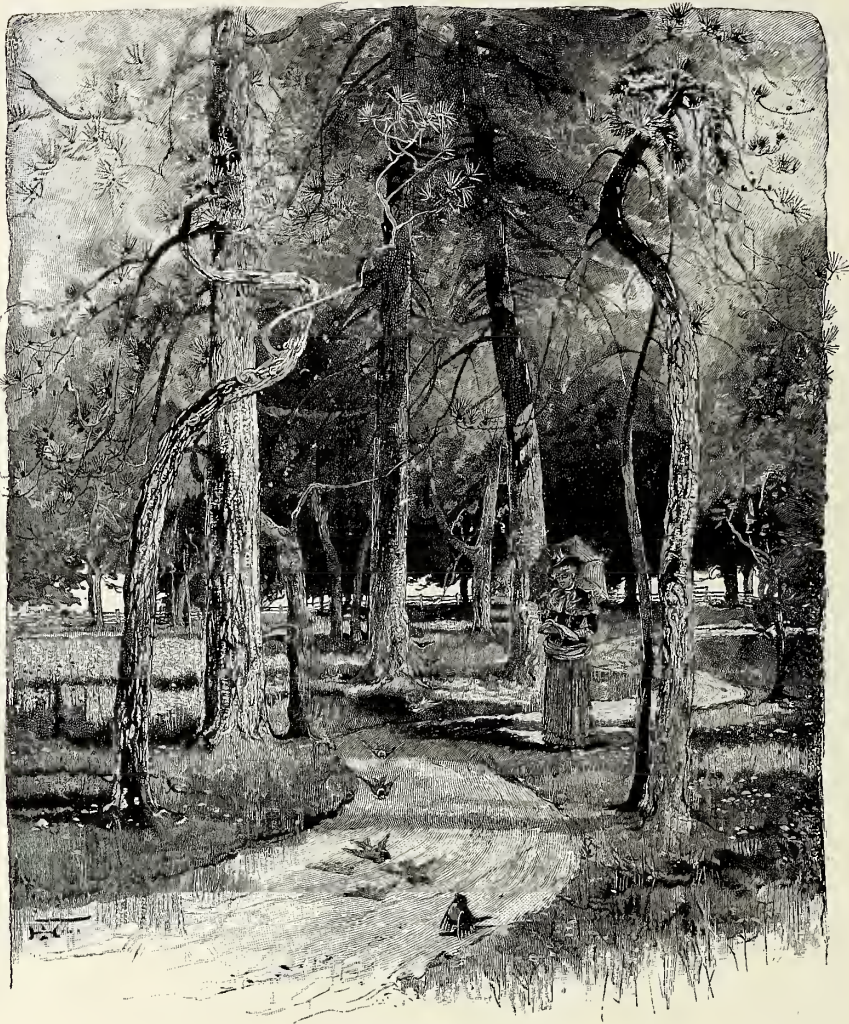
My first recollection of Mr. Clay goes back to the fall of 1820; I was then in my seventeenth year, and a member of the junior class in the academical department of Transylvania University, now known as the Kentucky University. Court was in session, and led by curiosity I entered the crowded room. There stood Mr. Barry addressing the jury, and soon afterwards another gentleman behind the bar filled a glass tumbler with claret, and during a pause in Mr. Barry's argument handed it to him, saying as he did so, in a very cheery tone of voice, "I'll treat you, though you are against me." That gentleman was Mr. Clay. Mr. Barry, without manifesting any surprise, drank the claret just as if it were an ordinary occurrence, and went on with his argument. This incident is all that I remember of the whole case, and it fixed itself in my memory because it was something altogether new to me. I had never seen anything of the sort in the courts at home, with which I was

pretty familiar, my father being the clerk of these courts. Mr. Barry, a rare orator, was then the leader of the "fierce Democracy" of Kentucky.

I again saw Mr. Clay in December of the same year, a day or two before Christmas. Being still at school in Lexington, and there being no public conveyance between it and Mount Sterling, my father had come to take me home for the holidays. We were by the fire in the hall of the hotel, when Mr. Clay came in, and seeing my father, he greeted him at once with the familiar air and tone of an old friend, grasped him by the hand, and addressing him by his given name inquired about his health. I was somewhat startled, because I had never before heard any one call my father by his given name; but Mr. Clay's manner and the tones of his voice were so impressive, so natural, and apparently so sincere that my surprise was soon lost in my admiration of the man, and especially as my father seemed to be as much gratified by the meeting as Mr. Clay himself. After some friendly chat Mr. Clay urged my father to spend the night at Ashland, inasmuch as he had much to say to him. My father declined the invitation because, as the roads were in very bad condition and the days short, he



ICE-HOUSE, ASHLAND.



CLAY'S WALK.

would not be able to reach home before dark unless he got an early start in the morning. Then said Mr. Clay, "You of course must have breakfast before starting, and therefore you will lose no time by starting from the hotel at daybreak, and taking your breakfast at Ashland; you know Ashland is directly on your route home." My father accepted the invitation, and though we were at Ashland at an early hour the next morning, we found everything ready to receive us. No one was at the breakfast but Mr. and Mrs. Clay, my father and myself. The subjects talked of were the state of his health, which was not good, and that of his private affairs, which had suddenly become heavily embarrassed by his suretyship for a large amount, which, according to my recollection, he mentioned as being

\$40,000. He said that though he had been absent from Congress during its then session, yet as his health had somewhat improved, and he had succeeded in putting the surety debt on a basis as satisfactory to himself as he had any reason to expect, he hoped to be able to leave for Washington immediately after the holidays, and to be in his seat in the House of Representatives in time to take part in the debate on the question as to the admission of Missouri into the Union as a slave State.

In speaking of this heavy debt and of the uncertain state of his health, and indeed of the general pressure, public and private, then on him, he uttered no complaint and manifested neither despondency nor gloom; on the contrary, he was as bright and as cheery and as buoyant at that early breakfast as he was



THE CLAY MONUMENT, FROM ASHLAND LAWN.

the evening before; and when long years afterwards I got to know him well, I found this hopefulness and buoyancy of temperament were among his most marked and enduring characteristics. They were not only prominently displayed throughout the most stormy and anxious period of his life, say from 1825 to 1842, when he made his farewell address, but they gave a cheering glow to his conversation even when drooping under the heaviness of old age.

My own conjecture is that the large sum of about \$25,000 paid to the Northern Bank in Lexington, many years afterwards, by his friends, and without his knowledge, was in part at least the residue of that surety debt above referred to. Mr. John Tilford, president of that bank, in a published letter now before me, of date Lexington, May 20, 1845, says: "Within the last two months I have received, from various sections of the United States, letters to my address containing money which I was requested to apply to the payment of the Hon. H. Clay's debts, with no other information than that it was a contribution by friends who owed him a debt of gratitude for services he had rendered his country, etc. The amount so received was \$25,750."

"Who did this?" inquired Mr. Clay, with tears in his eyes and in his voice; to which Mr. Tilford replied, "I do not know; it is sufficient to say that it was not done by your enemies."

As Mr. Clay was occupied by his public duties as Secretary of State at Washington, he was at home but seldom between 1825 and 1829; but, on his several visits, the ordinary courtesies between him and myself were observed, and I am gratified by being able to say that my admiration increased with my better acquaintance with him. It is not surprising, therefore, that I took especial care to be present whenever he addressed his constituents, the jury, or the court.

On my marriage, in 1830, Mr. and Mrs. Clay gave the bride and the groom a handsome entertainment. I, however, ascribed the compliment to the fact that the bride was a favorite niece of Mrs. Clay, and that fact no doubt contributed to bring us socially more frequently and more closely together until my removal to Vicksburg in 1835; but after my return from Vicksburg in 1840, and especially after I began housekeeping in 1841, and resumed the practice of law in Lexington in 1842, the social intercourse was renewed not only between our respective families, but



THE HALL.

between Mr. Clay and myself, until, at last, and for several years preceding his death, it ripened into an intercourse of rare confidence and trust, without any special effort on my part to bring it about. Indeed, it came about so naturally that I was never conscious of the precise time of its beginning. It was well known to the public, for instance, that I was never a member of his political party, and about as well known that I always entertained the highest respect and admiration for him; and he was as fully aware of these facts as any of the public. I could say more on this subject, and to the same effect, but probably what I have said is enough to satisfy my descendants that, throughout my whole personal intercourse with him, I maintained my own self-respect by a frank though civil and gentlemanly adherence to the principles of the Democratic party as I understood them. I must say, however, that

when I came to the conclusion, as I did, that General Jackson indorsed, even if he did not originate, the foul calumny of bargain and intrigue between Mr. Adams and Mr. Clay, by which the one secured the Presidency and the other the office of Secretary of State, I was placed by that conviction in a predicament very painful to myself. I, however, after due reflection, kept that matter to myself, and though the General had thereby lost his hold on my personal respect, yet I quietly moved on with the great body of the Democratic party; for I was a Democrat by birth and conviction.

Mr. Clay for several years prior to his death seldom came to town without calling at my office; the fact was indeed so well known that strangers wishing to pay him their respects were often referred to my office, and farmers in the county would often bring to its door a fine horse or a fine colt to exhibit to him.

They knew that he was a breeder of thoroughbred stock of every kind, from the shepherd dog to the high-mettled race-horse; was an excellent judge of all such stock, and as much at home with the horse and horsemen as with senators and in the Senate.

An application to Mr. Clay, made by me in behalf of my son as a candidate for the Naval Academy, was the only personal favor I ever asked at his hands; and had he given me no other evidence of his regard but this, I should feel under lasting obligation to him. I have, however, occasionally made personal appeals to him in behalf of others with whom I had no connection except personal regard, and in such cases I never failed to secure what I applied for.

I never wrote to him in regard to such a matter but once. The post-office in this place became vacant in January, 1852, by the death of the incumbent, a personal and political friend of Mr. Clay. The chief clerk at that time was a Democrat, without being a partisan, and desired to succeed to the place. He was in all respects competent, and had made himself very popular by his conduct in the office. He desired a letter from me to Mr. Clay, recommending him, and I was anxious that he should get the place. I felt, however, that I had no right to press a Democrat upon Mr. Clay. I, however, wrote to him upon the subject, stating the fact of the vacancy, and giving the names of the applicants, all of whom, I said, were his political friends except this gentleman. I said, further, that he had been chief clerk, was in every way competent, and if the question was submitted to the popular vote, he would, as I believed, receive a decided majority over any of his competitors.

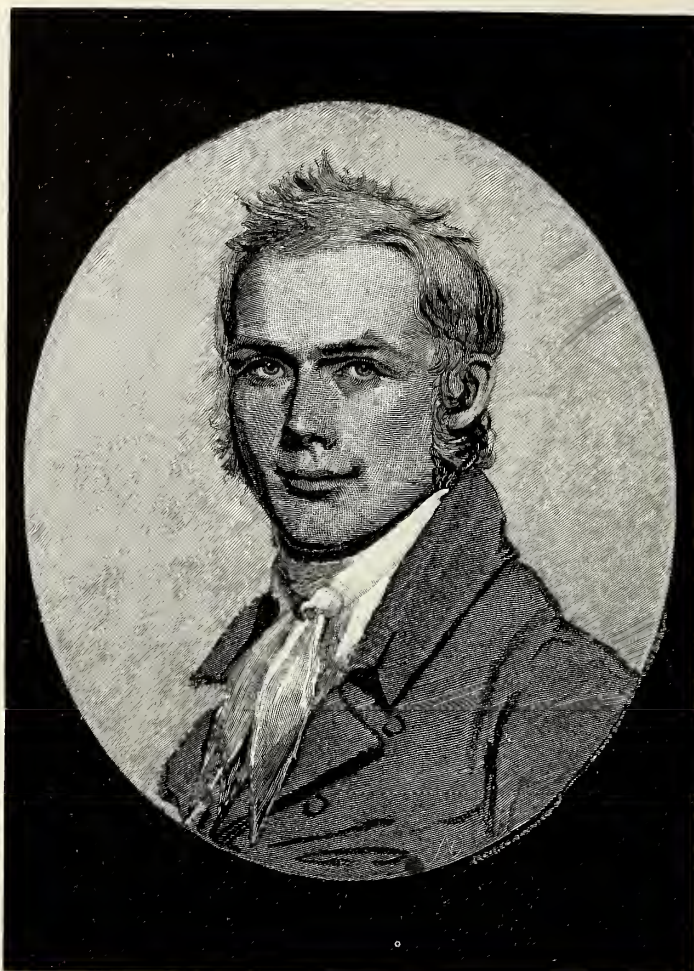
Mr. Clay, by his letter of January 26, 1852, informed me that he had conferred with the Postmaster-General, and advised him to appoint my friend, which he had no doubt already had been, or shortly would be, done. On the next day after receiving this letter the commission arrived. This letter was written by an amanuensis, Mr. Clay being then in very feeble health. His signature indicates considerable physical weakness.

My last interview with Mr. Clay was at Ashland, in the fall of 1851, on the day before his departure on his last trip to Washington. I was accompanied on that visit by General John C. Breckinridge and Major M. C. Johnson, then, as now, president of the Northern Bank at Lexington. The day was damp, chilly, and cloudy, and the visit, though very pleasant, was a gloomy one to us all. Mr. Clay was very feeble, though he remained in the parlor with us and accompanied us to the front door, where we bade him good-bye.

He was evidently affected, and, as if feeling, as we all felt, that we would never see him alive thereafter, before leaving the door he touched me on the shoulder, and stepping back a few paces, said in a very quiet voice, "Remember that my will is in the custody of my wife." I was one of the executors of that will. The other two were his wife, Mrs. Lucretia Hart Clay, and the Honorable Thomas A. Marshall, then, and for many years, Judge and Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals of Kentucky. He was a nephew of John Marshall, the great Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and one of the purest gentlemen I have ever known. As the testator had requested that no security should be required of us, we all qualified as executors without security. Mr. Clay's health for some months at Washington continued to be about the same as when he left home; but in the spring of 1852 he began to grow daily weaker from a cough which it was impossible to relieve. On the 28th of April, 1852, I received a telegram from him in these words: "Tell Thomas to come as soon as he can."

His son Thomas, of course, immediately left for Washington, and remained there in attendance on his father until his death, on the 29th of June following. Among Mr. Clay's last words, if not his very last, as reported to me by his son, were, "Thomas, I am dying; telegraph Mr. Harrison." That dispatch was received by me a few minutes after his death, and delivered to Mrs. Clay. That I secured the confidence of this illustrious man, and under circumstances somewhat peculiar retained it to his dying hour, is among the most pleasant memories of my long and somewhat eventful life. Though aware of my political status, yet he never attempted to influence my vote or to change in any way my political convictions.

Surprise has occasionally been expressed by strangers that some of Mr. Clay's family were not with him during his long illness at Washington. There was no occasion for any such surprise; he was devoted to his family, and they to him. His affection for them made him unwilling to call any of them from their homes when he did not need them, and therefore in his letters to them, some of which I have seen, he entreated them to remain where they were until he should need their services, when they would be notified; he said also that he was carefully attended to, all his wants were actually anticipated by his attendants, and that he was as comfortable as he could be at his own home. He had his own hired servant, James G. Marshall, whom I met after his death, and who by his intelli-



(Engraved by D. Nichols, from a miniature in possession of John M. Clay, Esq.)

HENRY CLAY, BETWEEN THIRTY AND FORTY.

gence and gentlemanly manner made a most favorable impression on me.

Mr. Clay knew that his son James was then upon his farm near St. Louis, and that the elder brother Thomas, residing near Lexington, could leave home with less inconvenience than any other member of the family, but he preferred that none of them should come until requested by him. Thomas was called for by the dispatch, and he left for Washington immediately upon receiving it.

Thomas returned with the funeral cortège, and some time after probate of the will handed me the document marked "Memoranda of H. Clay." It has no date, but is probably the last document ever signed by Mr. Clay. It was written by Thomas from his father's dictation, and but a few days before his death, as Thomas informed me. I have the original now in my scrap-book. It is as follows:

"MEMORANDA OF H. CLAY.

"I leave with you a check on Messrs. Corcoran & Riggs for any balance standing to my credit in the books of their bank at the time you present the check. The balance now is about \$1600, but it may be diminished before you have occasion to apply for it.

"Mr. Underwood will draw from the secretary of the Senate any balance due to me there for my services, and pay it over to you.

"Out of these funds I wish you to pay Dr. Hall's bill, the apothecary's bill, and Dr. Francis Jackson's bill of Philadelphia.

"Whatever may be necessary to pay those debts, and may be necessary to bear your expenses to Kentucky, had better be appropriated and reserved accordingly, and the balance to be converted in a bank check on New York, which will be safer to carry and more valuable in Kentucky.

"I have settled with James G. Marshall, my servant, and at the end of this month he will have paid me all that I have advanced him, and I shall owe him two dollars. The deed for his lot in Detroit, which he assigned to me as security for being his indorser on a note in bank, is in my little trunk in your mother's

room, in the bundle marked 'Notes and valuable papers.' I wish the deed taken out and delivered to James, as the matter is settled.

"The Messrs. Hunter, who have bought my Illinois land, have been very punctual in paying me the purchase money as it became due heretofore. The last payment of \$2000 is due at Christmas. They have written to me that they will come over and pay it, and at the same time receive a pair of Durham calves as a present which I promised them. I wish that promise fulfilled. The heifer I bought of Mr. Hunt, being a descendant of the imported cow Lucretia, I designed for one of the animals to be presented.

"There is a note of upwards of \$1000 among my papers in the pocket-book, well secured and payable in New Orleans next November. My executors ought to send it down there for collection.

"H. CLAY."

I reproduce this document to illustrate some of Mr. Clay's personal traits, which it does more distinctly and completely than any other paper I have seen. It does not illustrate him as the great orator or statesman, or as the greater leader of men, but illustrates the man just as he had been, and was, in his daily intercourse with the world. In all his dealings he was as exact and as watchful of his personal credit as a banker should be. In his last moments he displayed in this document the particularity and exactness that had characterized him in all his business transactions, and in the same document he displayed his sense of justness by specifying the debts to be paid out of his means then in Washington, and by specifying the rights of the colored servant, James G. Marshall, with such particularity that he would have no difficulty in the assertion of his own rights. And, lastly, who but Henry Clay would, in that extreme hour, have recollected a voluntary promise in regard to the gift of a pair of calves, made probably a year or so before? "I wish," said he, "that promise fulfilled"; and it was fulfilled. I was somewhat curious to see the man whom Mr. Clay recollected at such a time, and in connection with such a promise. I saw him when he came for and took the calves home; he was a plain, uneducated, and obscure man, whose hard hands proved that his life had been a hard one.

As I was the youngest of the three executors, the active duties and general administration of the assets devolved chiefly upon me; though no important step was taken unless approved by the three, and by the sons, especially Thomas and James, who, or whose families, were the residuary devisees. Although the whole of the estate, including the two hundred acres, part of the Ashland tract, devised to his son John M. Clay, and a tract of about one hundred and twenty-five acres known as Mansfield, and devised to the family of his son Thomas H. Clay, was of the value of about \$100,000, yet there was but little

trouble in the administration: first, because the estate was unembarrassed, and secondly, because his sons cheerfully gave me all the assistance in their power, and they were much more familiar with the assets than I was.

The final settlement of our trust as executors was made at the October term of court in 1860, and was satisfactory to the family as well as to ourselves. It was approved by the court, and the executors were released from further responsibility. At this time the estate was not entirely distributed as directed by the will, and could not be until Mrs. Clay's death, which occurred about three or four years afterwards. My reason for making this settlement, and applying for my discharge, was that I was about to remove to New Orleans, and knew that I could no longer perform personally my duties as executor. The other executors were unwilling to act without me; they therefore joined in the settlement and in the application to be discharged, and thereupon the estate passed into other hands.

It may be proper for me to make some reference to the children of Mr. Clay, whom I knew intimately, and towards some of whom I sustained very confidential relations. James B. Clay was appointed by General Taylor, in 1849, *chargé d'affaires* to Portugal, and so far as I know, or believe, discharged the duties of that trust to the satisfaction of the Government. His father, I know, was gratified by the belief that his son had performed those duties to the satisfaction of Mr. Webster, then Secretary of State. In 1857 he was nominated by the Democratic convention for the Ashland district as its candidate for Congress, and was elected, after a heated and bitter contest, over his able Whig competitor, Roger W. Hanson, by a small majority; but for him to have been elected as a Democrat from that district, by even a small majority, was in itself a great triumph. He died in Canada during our civil war, having fled there with his family as to a place of refuge during those troublous times. Had he survived the war, he would doubtless have been crowned with even more exalted honors. Roger Hanson, his competitor, went South, and joining his fortune with the Confederacy rose to eminence, becoming a brigadier-general in the army, and died a few days after the battle of Stone River, from a wound received in that action.

The son T. H. Clay was elected to the Legislature from Fayette County, Ky., during the war, and was afterwards appointed by Mr. Lincoln Minister to Nicaragua; which position he filled to the satisfaction of the Government, so far as I know or have heard. He died at his home several years after his return from that mission.

His son Henry was graduated from West Point, and during the war with Mexico was lieutenant-colonel of a Kentucky regiment, of which W. R. McKee was colonel. Both were mortally wounded at the great battle of Buena Vista while leading their regiment in a charge upon the enemy. And thus three of the sons of Mr. Clay have passed with honors into the history of their country.

The youngest son, John M. Clay, is yet living on part of the old homestead, and is one of the best farmers in the county. He has never held public office, nor indeed sought to hold any, having no ambition in that direction, but is one of our most respectable and respected citizens, and one of my best friends.

Ashland, so memorable as the home of Henry Clay, is now in possession of two of his descendants. His son John M. Clay still owns the two hundred acres devised him by his father's will, and from his front door the monument erected to his father is distinctly visible, though two miles distant. The residue, about three hundred and twenty-five acres, is occupied and owned by Colonel H. C. McDowell, who married the daughter and only surviving child of Colonel Henry Clay. And thus a long-cherished hope of the illustrious father and grandfather has been realized. His beloved Ashland is owned and occupied by some of his own descendants, and I trust that it may pass from one generation of them to the next while the world stands.

Though I have given to some extent some of the traits of Mr. Clay, and though I am now past my eightieth year, yet I feel that I must attempt to make the picture of him somewhat more complete and accurate.

Mr. Clay was tall and broad-shouldered without being bulky or fleshy, and when at all excited was of stately and commanding presence. Though his long limbs were loosely put together, yet his manner was neither awkward nor uncouth, nor ever embarrassed; on the contrary, it was easy and natural, and wholly unpretentious; it was the easy, nonchalant air of a man accustomed to the ways of the world, and conscious that he was at least the peer of the foremost in every crowd in which he happened to be. Indeed, my own opinion is that he was never in the slightest degree, even in his early youth, awed by the presence of any one; he never seemed to feel, and my belief is he never felt, that he was ever at any time in the presence of any one superior to himself. And therefore he was not only strikingly at ease, but at home, wherever he was, whether among his neighbors or strangers, whether at a social gathering, or at the bar, or as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or on the floor of the Senate;

and in my judgment he would have felt equally at home at a conference with kings and emperors. He seemed to have not only an instinctive consciousness of his own strength, but of his own special capacity for leadership. Therefore he would take the lead to himself as if unconsciously, whatever the occasion, and as naturally and as gracefully as if it were his birthright; and few there were, if any, who ever seemed to be surprised that he had taken the place for which nature appeared to have designed him. Indeed, without any appearance of self-assertion on his part, and as if unconsciously to himself, there was a something in his presence and his manner that gave to him an authoritative air, and made him for the time the central, the commanding figure of the group about him. Persons who never saw him, and who of course never felt the potency of his presence and manner, can hardly understand the sort of impression made on others by what was called the magnetism of the man. They would probably infer from my general account of him that there must have been in his presence and manner some manifestation of arrogance and vanity; there was, however, in his general intercourse no manifestation of either. I think he was as free from vanity as any one I ever knew. Though often with him, I never knew him to make himself the hero of his own story; and when questioned, as he occasionally was by me and by others in my presence, in regard to any matter in which he had taken a prominent part, he would merely state the facts, the several steps by which results were reached, and then the naked results, just as if there was nothing remarkable in the part he had taken. But whatever the occasion or his mood, and whatever the company or the subject of the conversation, there was a something in his self-poised presence and manner that impressed those around him that within his personality and beneath that manner there was a power, a force of character, to be respected, feared, followed, and honored. Had this quiet force been arrogantly or ostentatiously displayed, it would have broken the charm that made him so attractive and at the same time so commanding. I never saw any approach to any such display, unless possibly in some stormy debate, when with a monarch's voice and in an attitude of lofty defiance he would spurn assaults, whether direct or indirect, upon his principles, his consistency, or his honor.

Probably the idea I have attempted above to describe would be more readily seen by an illustration than by my description of it. Though we were often together, and though we talked of any matter, however unimportant, that casually came up, yet I was never with

him, whether alone or in company, without feeling that I was in the presence of a great man. My supposition was that this feeling on my part was the result of my personal admiration, or possibly of some peculiarity in my own temperament; but on inquiry of others less emotional than myself, I found that in every instance the impression made on them by his presence and manner was identical with that made on me.

Mr. Clay's complexion was very fair; so fair, indeed, that I had supposed that his hair, when a young man, must have been of a sandy or yellowish tint; and on expressing that opinion to Mrs. Clay several years after his death, I was greatly surprised by her prompt reply, "You were never more mistaken; he had when a young man the whitest head of hair I ever saw."

His eyes were gray, and when excited were full of fire; his forehead high and capacious, with a tendency to baldness; his nose prominent, very slightly arched, and finely formed. His mouth was unusually large without being disfiguring. It, however, was so large as to attract immediate notice; so large, indeed, that, as he said, he "never learned how to spit"; he had learned to snuff and smoke tobacco, and but for his unmanageable mouth he would probably have learned to chew also.

His chief physical peculiarity, however, was in the structure of his nervous system; it was so delicately strung that a word, a touch, a memory would set it in motion. But though his nervous system was thus sensitive, yet his emotions, however greatly excited, were of themselves never strong enough to disturb the self-poise of his deliberate judgment. His convictions were fixed as fate, and yet, as I thought, he was the most emotional man I ever knew. I have seen his eyes fill instantly on shaking the hand of an old friend, however obscure, who had stood by him in his early struggles, and whom after a long interval he had suddenly met. I have seen the letter of a grandchild, then residing in a distant State, drop from his hand when he was reading it aloud to some members of his family. His eyes were too full of tears to see, and his speech too full of emotion to utter the touching words of the child. I read the letter: there was not even a suggestion in it to give pain; it was only a loving letter of a child, full of tender messages to her grandmother and to him.

His sympathies were wide as human nature, and were alive not only to its struggles and its virtues, but even to its infirmities; and, in case of any great affliction in the family of a friend or neighbor, his condolence was ever ready, and in a manner and tone of voice as

tender and touching and as natural as if the affliction were his own.

This emotional quality so natural to him, and always so naturally shown, was a marked characteristic and a great element of his power over the heart. His magnetic power was a natural result of the lofty, the unmistakable and generously tempered manliness of the man.

The muscles of his face, even in his old age, never had any of the rigidity or leathery appearance or toughness which sometimes accompanies old age; on the contrary, his features even then were apparently as tender and as flexible as a child's, and expressed as naturally and as readily as the features of a child the emotion of the moment, whatever that emotion was; and when in high debate his every muscle, his whole physical structure, would be alive with the lofty passion that was giving fire and force to every thought he uttered. I have never seen any one but himself whose entire physical structure so readily and so naturally responded to its own emotions and passions; nor ever heard any voice but his own that so harmonized with whatever he felt and uttered. Indeed, when there would seem to be no occasion for any great emotion or for the display of it, yet if the subject presented issues of great concern to his client, to the public, or to himself, his heart, full of the subject, and as if impressed with its responsibility, would manifest its emotion not only in the preliminary outlines of the facts to be considered, but frequently even before he had uttered a word. You would see the emotion in his whole person as he slowly rose to his feet; you would see it in his drooping posture, in the deathly pallor of his face, in his brimful eye, in the spasmodic twitching of his under lip; and upon the utterance of the first sentence you would hear it in the touching tones of his magnetic voice. These all harmonized naturally and without effort with the passions and utterances of the moment. It was nature visibly at work, and bringing into harmonious action before your eyes all the great elements, mental, moral, and physical; and this rare combination of forces actively at work, in high debate, gave to his eloquence a naturalness, a concentrated earnestness and impetuosity that for the time was overwhelming. It awed men even when they were not convinced by him.

Mr. Clay's father, a Baptist preacher in humble circumstances, and with a large family, was himself somewhat distinguished in his day for eloquence. I have seen a letter written more than sixty years ago by a gentleman in Virginia who knew Mr. Clay's father, in which he states that crowds would come to hear him

when it was known that he would preach. This letter was written to Mr. Clay and found among his papers. He died in 1781, when the son Henry was between four and five years old, and thereupon the widow took charge of the small estate and seven fatherless children. It was a heavy burden, but Providence had thrown it on her, and she proved equal to it; at least so thought her illustrious son. He always paid to her the most loving attention until her death in 1827, and never mentioned her but with reverence, gratitude, and love. A tasteful but modest monument placed by him over her grave now stands near the conspicuous shaft afterwards erected by the public to his own memory.

The widow did what she could for all her children, though she could do but little towards their school education. She sent Henry to a common country school in the Slashes of Hanover, where he learned to read, write, and cipher. Thereupon his school education ended forever. When not at school he aided in the family maintenance by such labor as a boy could do on the small farm. This was the daily routine, until in 1792 his stepfather, Captain Watkins, who seems to have felt a special interest in this stepson, made an arrangement with the clerk of the High Court of Chancery of Richmond, Virginia, by which this country boy, this uneducated orphan, secured not only employment as deputy clerk, but maintenance while so employed.

Present occupation and present maintenance were matters of first necessity to him, and these being for the time secure, his mother and stepfather removed to Kentucky, and left the impulsive, penniless boy at the age of fifteen, amid the temptations of city life, to his own guidance; and yet this uneducated orphan, without money or any especial friends to superintend his associations or his habits, apparently alone in the world, became in after years and at an early period of his long life the observed of all observers, not only as the most commanding speaker the National House of Representatives ever had, but as the most commanding orator and the lordliest leader of his day. There was not a crisis during his public career to which he was unequal, nor a storm threatening to wreck the Union in which he was not the pilot who weathered that storm. His faith in his own strength and in his own capacity to hold the helm and guide the ship was unfaltering, and he had the happy gift of inspiring his friends with a like confidence in his capacity and strength. "Who sails with me comes safe to land" was alike his faith and their faith, and had he been alive in 1860 and 1861, every

heart and every eye would have turned to him to take the helm again.

How do I account for a career so remarkable, when its beginning was under circumstances apparently so unpropitious? In the first place, nature had endowed him with great possibilities, which, naturally developed and matured, were bound to fit him for a great career. In other words, greatness in his case was inevitable, unless his elementary forces, mental, moral, and physical, were dwarfed or perverted by some unnatural or unpropitious training in his childhood and youth. Second, that fortunately for him his innate faculties, his possibilities, were neither in his childhood nor in his boyhood nor in his early manhood subjected to any narrow or unnatural training; on the contrary, all his surroundings in his infancy and until he could walk alone, a man among men, were by the chances of life or by the hand of Providence the very surroundings of all others, then within his reach, the most likely to develop naturally and to their full completeness, the peculiar faculties with which nature had endowed him.

Fortunately Mr. Clay's real education, that sort of education which aroused and stimulated into activity his elementary faculties, neither began nor ended at the country school in the Slashes of Hanover. What he learned at that country school was, to be sure, of service to him, but of service only as a humble instrument in the hands of the boy. Had he, however, learned nothing else, had his whole education been limited to the little he learned at that school, his great possibilities would never have been developed, and he no doubt would have lived and died in obscurity, unhonored and unsung. Nature, however, did not lose sight of the orphan son of the Baptist preacher, though tossed as he had been into the big world at the age of fifteen, apparently alone and dependent upon his daily labor for his daily bread. The world is a hard school and full of hazard to an impulsive boy, even when guided by the watchful eye of the parent. But however hard and hazardous the world may be to an impulsive boy, thrown into it at the age of fifteen, and on his own resources, yet in his case, and by a fortunate succession of circumstances unexpected and apparently of but little importance at the time, the arrangement under which he was left at that age and to his own guidance, amid the temptations of the city of Richmond, was not only the most fortunate event of his life, but probably the very best arrangement for the natural development of all powers.

I, however, am not writing the biography of Mr. Clay. Those who expect to see in this sketch the particulars of his life will be disap-

pointed. My sole purpose in undertaking this labor in the eighty-first year of my age was to preserve in a family scrap-book, for my descendants, the letters written by him to me, as well as other original papers of some interest bearing his signature; and while engaged in that work it occurred to me that it would add to the interest of the autographs were I to give my personal recollections of him, and the impression he had made on me. I regret that the same idea did not occur to me at an earlier day, before time and toil and the troubles incident to a long life had worn me out. I ought to have begun the work, if at all, twenty years ago, when my mind was more active and my memory fresher. But as I did not undertake it for the public, but wholly for the entertainment of my descendants, I do not regret, and am sure they will not regret, that I, even in my old age, undertook on their account to do what I have done, however meager my reminiscences may seem, or however inartistic the style and the manner in which those reminiscences have been presented. Having completed a task I set for myself, and as well as under the circumstances I could, I now bring it to a close by annexing a few facts and anecdotes which tend to throw some light on the character of Mr. Clay.

In a conversation in regard to General Washington, an inquiry was made of Mr. Clay as to his information in regard to certain vices imputed to the General by tradition. "Ah," said Mr. Clay, "General Washington was so good and great a man that no tradition to his disparagement should be remembered or repeated."

About the time of General Taylor's nomination by the Whig convention as its candidate for the presidency, there was believed to be an estrangement between Mr. Clay and Mr. Crittenden. It was the more noticed because the two had been known as life-long friends, both personal and political. Yet I never heard Mr. Clay speak of it, though I have heard the matter discussed in his presence while he was reading a newspaper. During this estrangement I read a letter from Mr. Clay to his wife, containing a message to me, saying that President Fillmore had consulted him in regard to the appointment of Attorney-General, and that he had advised him to appoint Mr. Crittenden to that office. In the same letter he expressed the wish that his family should be kind to Mr. Crittenden. As to any real reconciliation between the two, I have no knowledge, but I have strong doubts.

During the administration of General Jackson, the public was startled by the rumor of a defalcation in the Post-Office Department,

the Hon. W. T. Barry of Lexington city being the Postmaster-General. Mr. Clay, then in the Senate, was leader of the opposition to General Jackson and to his administration. The party struggle was fierce and bitter, and, besides, Mr. Barry was a decided partisan of General Jackson, in whose cabinet he was, and had led the opposition in Kentucky to Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams. Under the circumstances Mr. Barry had no right to expect liberal treatment at the hands of Mr. Clay. Yet when the matter was in some way before the Senate, Mr. Clay took occasion to say in substance that the rumored defalcation might be true, but even if true he was sure that Mr. Barry had no personal connection with it; that he had known Mr. Barry many years, and vouched for the integrity of the man. Mr. Barry on the next day paid his personal respects to Mr. Clay, and from that time on their former pleasant intercourse was resumed.

During the many years of my intimacy with Mr. Clay, there was only one occasion on which I ever heard him speak harshly of any public man of his time, and that was in allusion to Mr. Seward. Though open as day on every public question, and though in fierce debate never afraid to throw a thunderbolt whenever in his opinion the occasion called for it, yet in his usual intercourse he was exceedingly reserved in his criticism of other public men.

Mr. Clay was very fond of pleasantries and occasionally indulged in a sort of persiflage, and when in the humor could say things without giving offense which, but for his peculiar manner and tone of voice and the pleasant twinkle of his eye, would have been somewhat offensive to a "touchy" person.

The following instance illustrates what I mean. It is well known that there were occasionally very unpleasant encounters in the Senate between Colonel Benton and Mr. Clay. To say the least, there was no love between the two. Colonel Benton, however, and Mrs. Clay were cousins, and the Colonel, notwithstanding the unpleasant passes between Mr. Clay and himself, was in the habit of calling at Ashland to pay his personal respects to her; and she on such occasions was always glad to see him, for she was somewhat proud of her Hart blood, of which family Colonel Benton was a member, his mother being a Hart. On one of these occasions my wife called at Ashland and found Colonel Benton and Mr. Clay in the parlor together. In a few moments Mrs. Clay made her appearance, and as she entered Mr. Clay, in a tone of charming banter and with a sort of mischievous humor in his eye, rose, and pointing to her said, "There, Colonel, is a member of my

family who never abused you." The effect was irresistible. All caught the idea and joined in a hearty laugh, and no one seemed to enjoy the very suggestive allusion more than the Colonel himself.

The following incident, however, was tinged with no such attempt at humor. It is well known that Mr. Tyler signalized his administration by betraying the confidence of the Whig party, by which he had been elected Vice-President. Suspicions and rumors were soon afloat that Mr. Tyler would not be true to the platform on which he was elected, and before these suspicions were absolutely confirmed by his own subsequent action, Mr. Clay, the leader of the Whig party, made a morning call on the President at the White House, and on entering the room said to Mr. Tyler, "Am I to understand that the two gentlemen I met as I came up the steps to your room are the advisers of the President?" The two gentlemen referred to were Mr. Cushing of Massachusetts and Governor Wise of Virginia. Both these gentlemen were Democratic politicians, and leaders of what was known then as the "Corporal's Guard." They had been closeted with Mr. Tyler just before Mr. Clay came, and he evidently understood the purport of their visit. Mr. Clay's remark was made in a very stately though civil manner. Mr. Tyler's face flushed up very quickly, but what his reply was I do not now remember. This incident was told me by a gentleman who was present, and I am satisfied of its correctness.

On the morning of the day when President

Harrison was expected to send to the Senate the names of the members of his Cabinet, some one remarked, in the presence of Mr. Clay, Mr. Crittenden, and several other members of Congress, that Mr. Webster was to be Secretary of the Treasury. "Oh, no," said Mr. Clay, "Mr. Webster is to take the Department of State." "That," said the first speaker, "was the original programme, but as Mr. Webster prefers the Treasury Department the President has consented to appoint him to the Treasury." Instantly and in his most impassioned manner Mr. Clay replied, "I will oppose it; I will denounce it in open Senate. The State Department is the proper place for Mr. Webster." This incident was communicated to me by the Hon. Richard Hawes, who at the time it occurred, in 1841, was a member of Congress from the Ashland district, and was present at the conversation. It is enough to say that Mr. Webster was nominated and confirmed Secretary of State, and Mr. Clay was satisfied.

It may not be amiss to say in conclusion that though he was not a scholar, though he had no knowledge of the metaphysics or rhetoric or logic of the schools, and in fact had a hearty contempt for all three of them, yet Mr. Clay's knowledge was always equal to the demands of his great career. In what debate did he ever fail to reach "the height of the great argument" the occasion called for? Or in what debate did any competitor because of his ripe scholarship pluck the laurel from his brow?

J. O. Harrison.

IN an article on "Ashland, the Home of Henry Clay," in *THE CENTURY* for December, 1886, Mr. Charles W. Coleman, Jr., suggests that Mr. Clay may have called his home Ashland in tender memory of Ashland, his native place in Virginia. A correspondent informs us, however, that Mr. Clay's birthplace was called *Slash Cottage*, and was not given the name of Ashland until many years after the Kentucky Ashland received its name.

Another correspondent writes that Mr. Clay did not study law with Francis Brooke, but with his brother, Robert Brooke, who was afterward Attorney-General of Virginia, and subsequently a governor of that State. The correspondence that Mr. Coleman refers to was with Francis Brooke, and not with Governor Brooke, as Mr. Coleman states.

Henry Clay, the Slashes, and Ashland again.

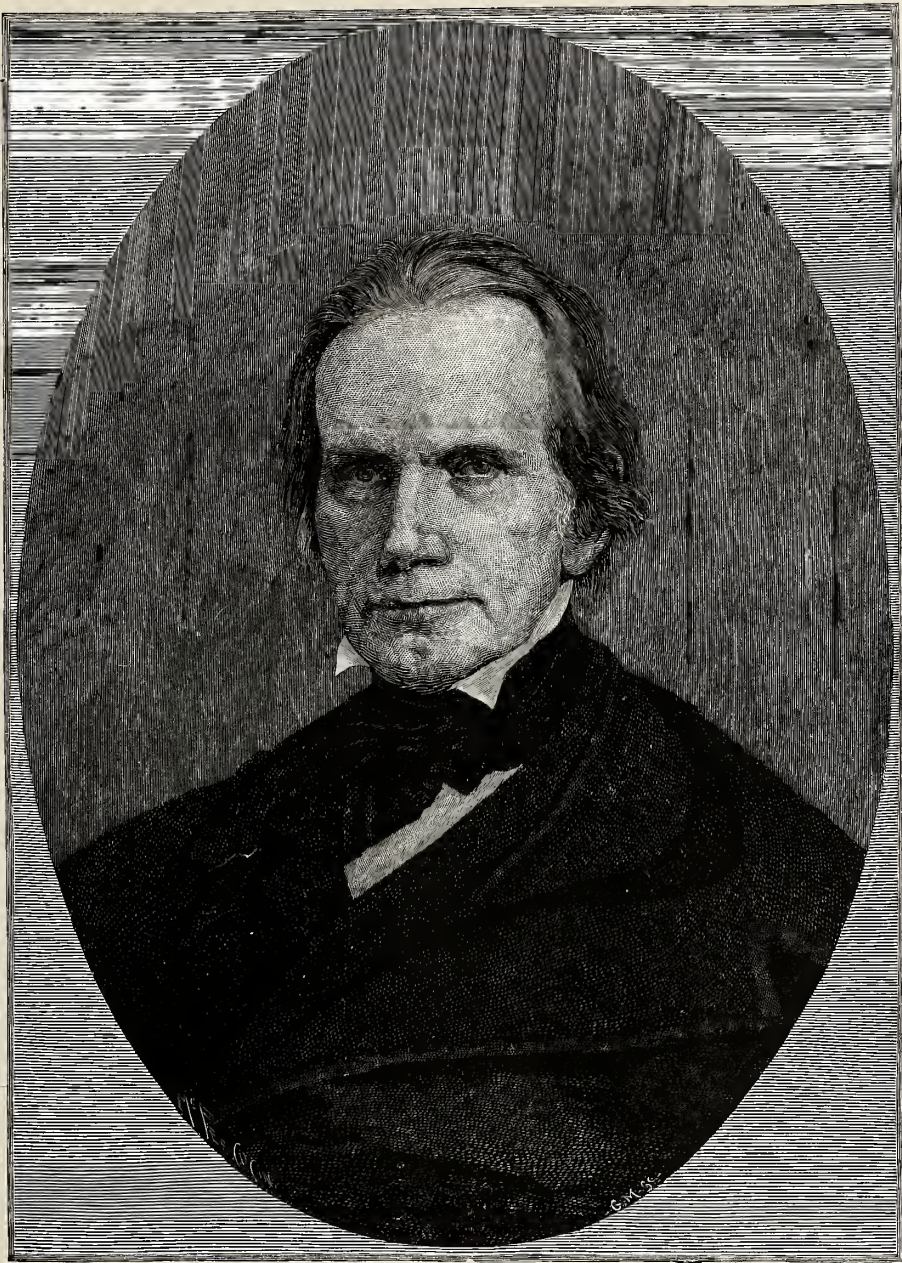
HENRY CLAY was born within three miles of Hanover Court House, south, and some four or five miles eastward of the present pretty little summer town of Ashland. His birthplace was known locally as "The old Clay place," or "The place where Henry Clay was born," and as long ago as 1832, and many years earlier, I believe, had passed into other hands.

The first name of the railway station where Ashland stands was called, in 1836, "Tayler's Sawmill"; then the name was appropriately changed to "Slash Cottage," being in the heart of the Slashes of Hanover. That name held till after 1850, when Mr. Edwin Robinson, of Richmond City, conceived the project of building a town at "Slash Cottage," and formally christened it "Ashland," after Mr. Clay's residence in Kentucky.

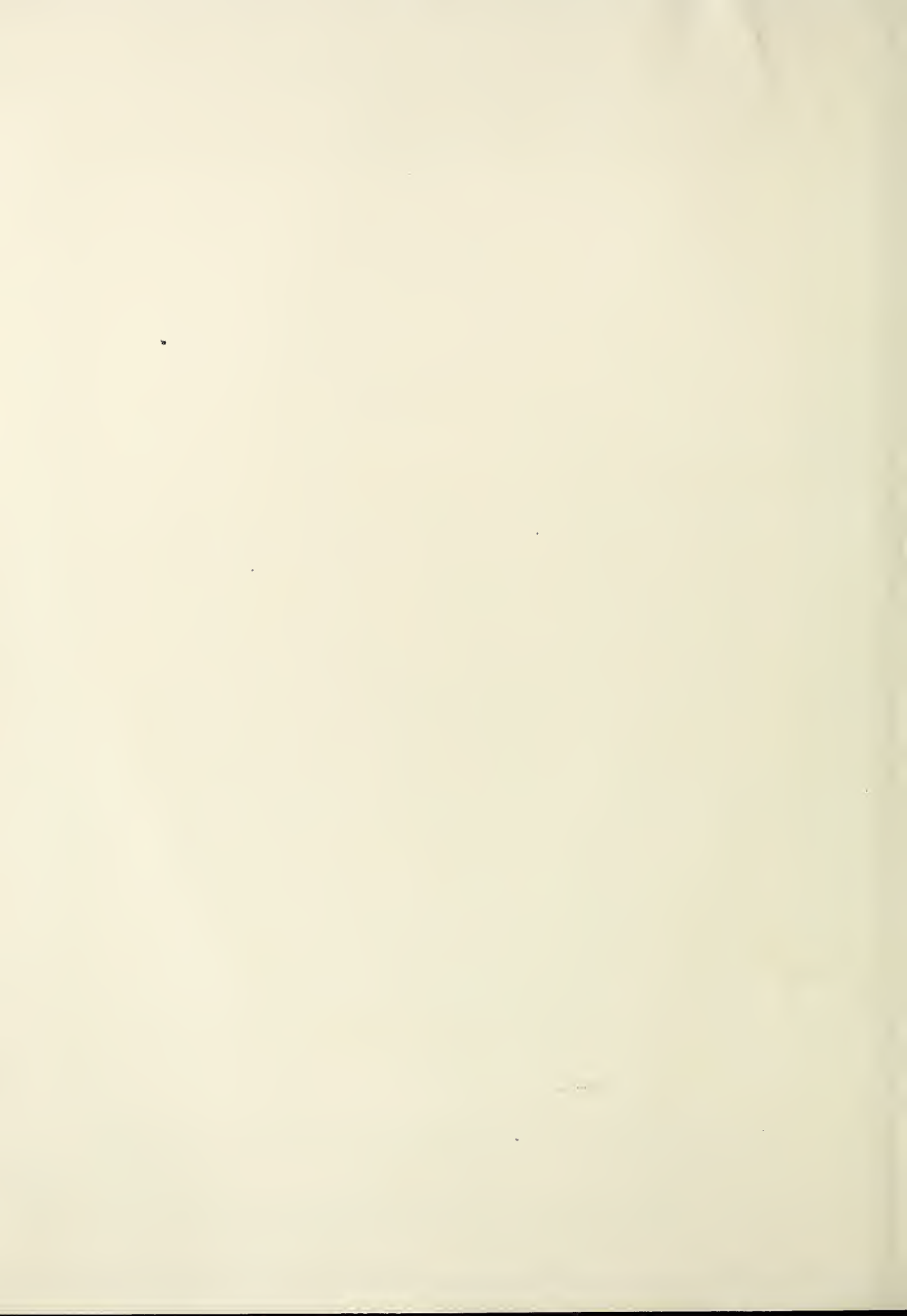
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HENRY CLAY.



HENRY CLAY,
POPULAR HERO, PATRIOT, AND STATESMAN.



WITH the close of the great civil war in 1865 disappeared from our politics the great problem which for half a century had absorbed the attention and tasked the abilities of American statesmen. Throughout that period there was always one overshadowing subject. Whatever other questions of domestic policy came up,—tariff, currency, internal improvements, State rights,—they were always subordinate to the main question, how to preserve the Union and slavery together. Some, like Calhoun, were ready to abandon the Union to save slavery; others, like Garrison, were ready to abandon the Union to destroy slavery; but between

these extremes stood a great body of able and patriotic statesmen, who loved and prized the Union above all else, and who, to save it, would make any sacrifice, would join in any compromise. At the head of these, for more than fifty years, towered the great figure of Henry Clay.

Not often does a man whose life is spent in purely civil affairs become such a popular hero and idol as did Clay—especially when it is his fate never to reach the highest place in the people's gift. "Was there ever," says Parton, "a public man, not at the head of a state, so beloved as he? Who ever heard such cheers, so hearty, distinct and ringing, as those which his name evoked? Men shed tears at his defeat, and women went to bed sick from pure sympathy with his disappointment. He could not travel during the last thirty years of his life, but only make *progresses*. When he left home the public seized him and bore him along over the land, the committee of one State passing him on to the committee of another, and the hurrahs of one town dying away as those of the next caught his ear." One evidence of his popularity is the great number of children named in his honor. An English woman traveling in America during the Presidential canvass of 1844 writes that at least three-fourths of all the boy babies born in that year must have been named for Henry Clay. "Even now, more than thirty years after his death," says Carl Schurz, writing in 1886, "we may hear old men, who knew him in the days of his strength, speak of him

with an enthusiasm and affection so warm and fresh as to convince us that the recollection of having followed his leadership is among the dearest treasures of their memory."

Henry Clay was born in Hanover county, near Richmond, Virginia, in one of the darkest days of the Revolution,—the year of 1777 ; the year of the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, before yet the glad news of Burgoyne's surrender had come to cheer the hearts of the struggling colonists. His father, a poor Baptist preacher, died when Henry was four years old, leaving a wife and seven children. There is a story that while his body was lying in the house, a party of British cavalry made a raid through the neighborhood, and left on Mrs. Clay's table a handful of silver to pay for some property they had taken ; but that as soon as they were gone, even in her poverty and grief the spirited woman swept the money from the table and threw it in the fireplace.

Clay's boyhood was that of the typical "self-made man,"—a time of hard labor, poverty, and small opportunities. "We catch our first glimpse of the boy when he sat in a little log school-house, without windows or floor, one of a humming score of shoeless boys, where a good-natured, irritable, drinking English schoolmaster taught him to read, write, and cipher as far as Practice. This was the only school he ever attended, and that was all he learned at it. His widowed mother with her seven young children, her little farm, and two or three slaves, could do no more for him. Next, we see him a tall, awkward, slender stripling of thirteen, still barefoot, clad in homespun butternut of his mother's making, tilling her fields, and going to mill with his bag of corn strapped upon the family pony." At fourteen, in the year 1791, a place was found for him in a Richmond drug store, where he served as errand boy and youngest clerk for one year.

At this time occurred an event which decided his future. His mother having married again, her husband had influence enough to obtain for the youth a clerkship in the office of the Court of Chancery. The young gentlemen employed in that office long remembered the entrance among them of their new comrade. He was fifteen at the time, but very tall for his age, very slender, very awkward, and far from handsome. His good mother had arrayed him in a full suit of pepper-and-salt "figinny," an old Virginia fabric of silk and cotton. His shirt and shirt-collar were stiffly starched, and his coat-tail stood out boldly behind him. The dandy clerks of Richmond exchanged glances as this gawky figure entered and took his place at a desk to begin work.

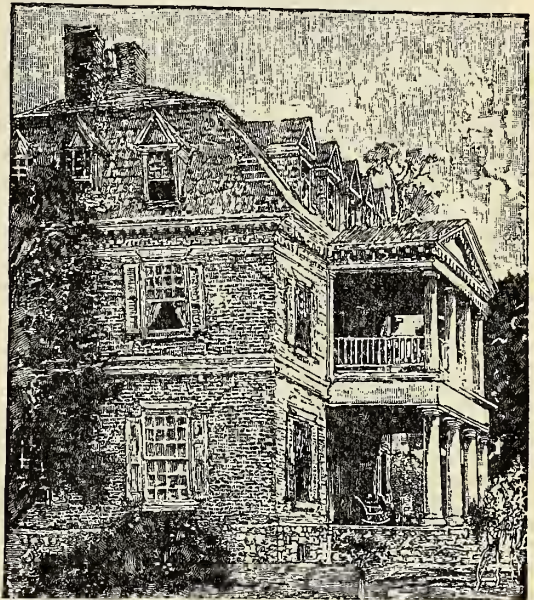
As he grew older, the raw and awkward stripling became a young man whose every movement had a winning or commanding grace. Handsome he never was ; but his ruddy face and abundant light hair, the grandeur of his forehead, and the speaking intelligence of his countenance, more than atoned for the irregularity of his features. But of all the physical gifts bestowed by nature

upon this favored child, the most unique and admirable was his voice. There was a depth of tone in it, a volume, a compass, a rich and tender harmony, which invested all he said with majesty. Parton writes that he heard it last when Clay was an old man, past seventy; and all he said was a few words of acknowledgment to a group of ladies in the largest hall in Philadelphia. "He spoke only in the ordinary tone of conversation; but his voice filled the room as the organ fills a great cathedral, and the ladies stood spellbound as the swelling cadences rolled about the vast apartment. We have heard much of Whitefield's piercing voice and Patrick Henry's silvery tones, but we cannot believe that either of those natural orators possessed an organ superior to Clay's majestic bass. No one who ever heard him speak will find it difficult to believe what tradition reports, that he was the peerless star of the Richmond Debating Society in 1795."

But he soon discovered that these gifts would not get him a paying practice as an attorney in Richmond so quickly as he desired; and as his mother and step-father had removed to Kentucky in 1792, he resolved to follow them to the western wilds, and there "grow up with the country." He was in his twenty-first year when he left Richmond, with his license to practice as an attorney, but with little else, in his pocket.

A tall, plain, poor, friendless youth was young Henry Clay, when he set up in Lexington, and announced himself a candidate for practice as an attorney. He had not even the means of paying his board. "I remember," he said, in a speech in 1842, "how comfortable I thought I should be if I could make £100, Virginia money, per year; and with what delight I received my first fifteen-shilling fee. My hopes were more than realized. I immediately rushed into a lucrative practice."

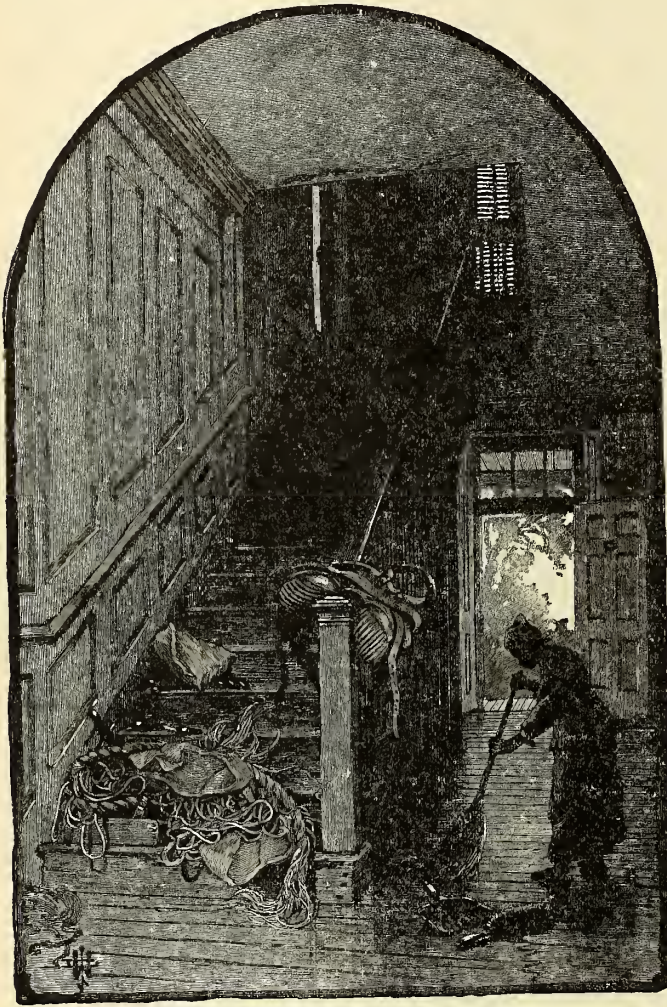
Less than two years after his arrival at Lexington, in April, 1799, Clay had achieved a position sufficiently secure to ask for and to obtain the hand of Lucretia Hart, the daughter of a man of high character and prominent standing in the State. She was a very estimable woman, and a most devoted wife to him. His prosperity increased rapidly; so that soon he was able to purchase Ashland, an estate of some six hundred acres, near Lexington, which afterward became famous as Henry Clay's home.



AN OLD VIRGINIA MANSION.

During the first thirteen years of Henry Clay's active life as a politician, he appears only as the eloquent champion of the policy of Mr. Jefferson, whom he esteemed the first and best of living men. After defending him on the stump and aiding him in the Kentucky Legislature, he was sent in 1806, when scarcely thirty, to fill for one term a seat in the Senate of the United States, made vacant

by the resignation of one of the Kentucky Senators. Returning home at the end of the session, he re-entered the Kentucky Legislature. In support of President Jefferson's policy of non-intercourse with the warring nations of Europe, who were preying upon American commerce, Mr. Clay proposed that members of the Legislature should bind themselves to wear nothing that was not of American manufacture. A Federalist member, ignorant of the fact that the refusal of the people to use foreign imports had caused the repeal of the Stamp Act, and would have postponed the Revolution but for the accident at Lexington, denounced Mr. Clay's proposition as the act of a demagogue. Clay challenged this ill-informed gentleman, and a duel resulted, in which two shots were ex-



AN OLD VIRGINIA MANSION—INTERIOR.

changed, and both antagonists were slightly wounded. Elected again to the Senate for an unexpired term, he re-appeared in that body in 1809, and sat during two sessions.

Mr. Clay's public life proper began in November, 1811, as a member of the House of Representatives. He was immediately elected speaker by the war party, by the decisive majority of thirty-one. He was then thirty-four years of age.

It is agreed that to Henry Clay, Speaker of the House of Representatives, more than to any other individual, we owe the war of 1812. When the House hesitated, it was he who, descending from the chair, spoke so as to re-assure it. When President Madison faltered, it was the stimulus of Clay's resistless presence that put heart into him again. Clay it was whose clarion notes rang out over departing regiments, and kindled within them the martial fire; and it was Clay's speeches which the soldiers loved to read by the camp-fire. When the war was going all wrong in the first year, President Madison wished to appoint Clay commander-in-chief of the land forces; but, said Gallatin, "What shall we do without him in the House of Representatives?"

In 1814, Clay was sent with four other commissioners to Ghent, in Belgium, to arrange the terms of a peace with England. A single anecdote will illustrate the impression he everywhere produced. An octogenarian British earl, who had retired from public life because of his years, but who still cherished a natural interest in public men and measures, being struck by the impression made in the aristocratic circles of London by the American commissioners, then on their way home from Ghent, requested a friend to bring them to see him at his house, to which his growing infirmities confined him. The visit was promptly and cheerfully paid, and the obliging friend afterwards inquired of the old lord as to the impression the Americans had made upon him. "Ah!" said the veteran, with the "light of other days" gleaming from his eyes, "I liked them all, but I liked the Kentucky man best." It was so everywhere.

From 1815, when he returned from Europe, until 1825, when he became Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams, Clay was Speaker of the House of Representatives. He was confessedly the best presiding officer that any deliberative body in America has ever known, and none was ever more severely tried. The intensity and bitterness of party feeling during the earlier portion of his speakership cannot now be realized except by the few who remember those days. On the floor of the house, Mr. Clay was often impetuous in discussion, and delighted to relieve the tedium of debate, and modify the bitterness of antagonism, by a sportive jest or lively repartee. On one occasion, General Smythe of Virginia, who often afflicted the house by the dryness and verbosity of his harangues, had paused in the middle of a speech, which seemed likely to endure forever, to send to the library for a book from which he wished to note a passage. Fixing his eye on Mr. Clay, he observed the Kentuckian writhing in his seat, as if his patience had already been exhausted. "You, sir," remarked Smythe, addressing him, "speak for the present generation; but I speak for posterity." "Yes," said Clay, "and you seem resolved to speak until the arrival of your audience."

Only once in the course of his long representative career was Clay obliged to canvass for his election, and he was never defeated, nor ever could be, before

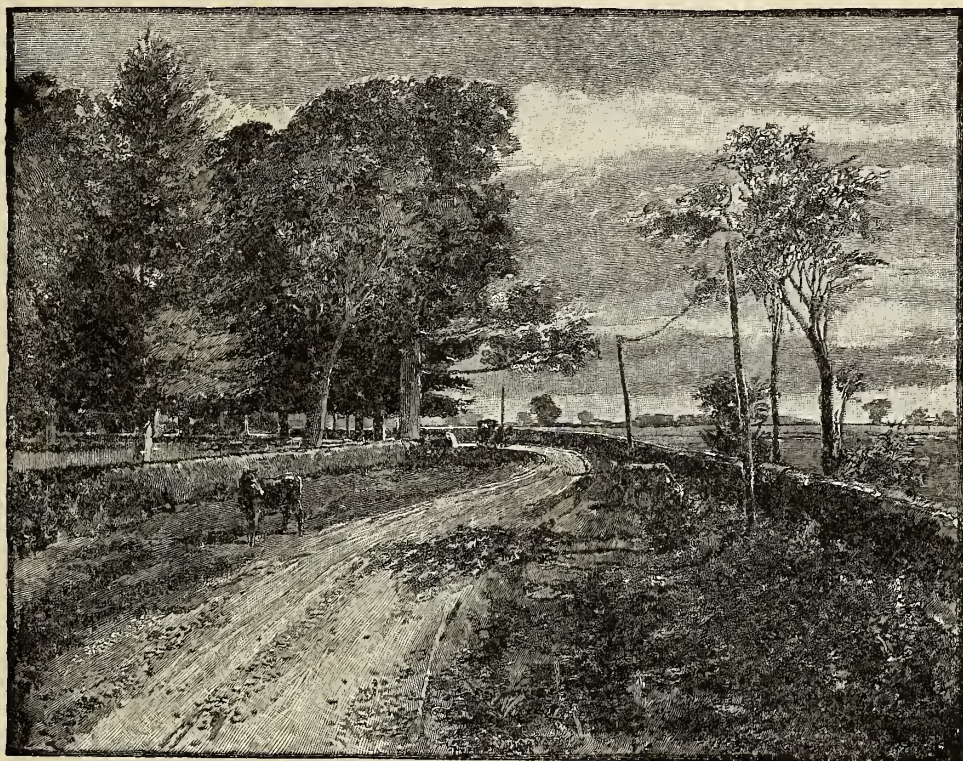
a public that he could personally meet and address. The one searching ordeal to which he was subjected, followed the passage of the "Compensation Act" of 1816, whereby Congress substituted for its per diem rate a fixed salary of \$1500 to each member. This act excited great hostility especially in the West, then very poor.

While canvassing the district, Mr. Clay encountered an old hunter, who had always before been his warm friend, but was now opposed to his re-election on account of the Compensation Bill. "Have you a good rifle, my friend?" asked Mr. Clay. "Yes." "Did it ever flash?" "Once only," he replied. "What did you do with it,—throw it away?" "No; I picked the flint, tried it again, and brought down the game." "Have I ever flashed, but upon the Compensation Bill?" "No!" "Will you throw me away?" "No, no!" exclaimed the hunter with enthusiasm, nearly overpowered by his feelings; "I will pick the flint, and try you again!" He was ever afterward a warm supporter of Mr. Clay.

THE FAMOUS "MISSOURI COMPROMISE."

In March, 1818, a petition for the admission of Missouri into the Union was presented in Congress; and then began that long and bitter struggle over slavery, which, after convulsing the country for nearly half a century, was finally ended on the banks of the Appomattox, in 1865. "No sooner had the debate begun," says Schurz, "than it became clear that the philosophical anti-slavery sentiment of the revolutionary period had entirely ceased to have any influence upon current thought in the South. The abolition of the foreign slave trade had not, as had been hoped, prepared the way for the abolition of slavery or weakened the slave interest in any sense. On the contrary, slavery had been immensely strengthened by an economic development making it more profitable than it ever had been before. The invention of the cotton gin by Eli Whitney, in 1793, had made the culture of cotton a very productive source of wealth. In 1800 the exportation of cotton from the United States was 19,000,000 pounds, valued at \$5,700,000. In 1820 the value of the cotton export was nearly \$20,000,000, almost all of it the product of slave labor. The value of slaves may be said to have at least trebled in twenty years. The breeding of slaves became a profitable industry. Under such circumstances the slaveholders arrived at the conclusion that slavery was by no means so wicked and hurtful an institution as their revolutionary fathers had thought it to be. The anti-slavery professions of the revolutionary time became to them an awkward reminiscence, which they would have been glad to wipe from their own and other people's memories. On the other hand, in the Northern States there was no such change of feeling. Slavery was still, in the nature of things, believed to be a wrong and a sore. The change of sentiment in the South had not yet produced its reflex in the North. The slavery question had not become a subject of difference of opinion

and of controversy among the Northern people. As they had abolished slavery in their States, so they took it for granted that it ought to disappear, and would disappear in time, everywhere else. Slavery had indeed, now and then, asserted itself in the discussions of Congress as a distinct interest, but not in such a way as to arouse much alarm in the free States. The amendment to the Missouri Bill, providing for a restriction with regard to slavery, came therefore in a perfectly natural way from that Northern sentiment which remained still faithful to the traditions of the revolutionary period. And it was a great surprise to most Northern people that so natural a proposition should be so fiercely resisted on



TURNPIKE IN THE BLUE GRASS REGION OF KENTUCKY.

the part of the South. It was the sudden revelation of a change of feeling in the South which the North had not observed in its progress. 'The discussion of this Missouri question has betrayed the secret of their souls,' wrote John Quincy Adams. The slaveholders watched with apprehension the steady growth of the free States in population, wealth, and power. In 1790 the population of the two sections had been nearly even. In 1820 there was a difference of over 600,000 in favor of the North in a total of less than ten millions. In 1790 the representation of the two sections in Congress had been about evenly balanced. In 1820 the census promised to give the North a preponderance of

more than thirty votes in the House of Representatives. As the slaveholders had no longer the ultimate extinction, but now the perpetuation, of slavery in view, the question of sectional power became one of first importance to them, and with it the necessity of having more slave States for the purpose of maintaining the political equilibrium, at least in the Senate. A struggle for more slave States was to them a struggle for life. This was the true significance of the Missouri question."

The famous "Missouri Compromise," by which the ominous dispute of 1820 was at last settled, included the admission of one free State (Maine) and one slave State (Missouri) at the same time;—a precedent which it was understood would be thereafter followed; and it was enacted that no other slave State should be formed out of any of the Louisiana or "Northwest territory" north of latitude 36° 30', which was the southern boundary line of Missouri. The assent of opposing parties to this arrangement was secured largely by the patriotic efforts of Clay, who, says Schurz, "did not confine himself to speeches, . . . but went from man to man, expostulating, beseeching, persuading, in his most winning way. . . . His success added greatly to his reputation and gave new strength to his influence." The result, says John Quincy Adams, was "to bring into full display the talents and resources and influence of Mr. Clay." He was praised as "the great pacificator,"—a character which was confirmed by the deeds of his later life.

During his long term in the House of Representatives, Clay had the misfortune to incur the hatred of General Jackson,—a hatred which, once roused, was implacable. The only ground for Jackson's ill-will was found in proper criticisms by Clay of his public acts; but to Jackson no criticism was proper; and from that time forward hatred of Clay became one of Jackson's leading motives, actually determining his course in many of the most important acts of his public life. In 1825 it led to an attack which profoundly affected the political history of the time, as well as the career of Henry Clay.

The presidential election of 1824 gave no one of the candidates a majority of the electoral votes. Jackson had 99 votes, Adams 84, Crawford 41, and Clay 37. Under the Constitution this result made it necessary for the House of Representatives to choose the President from among the three candidates having the largest number of votes. Clay was Speaker of the House; and as his influence at this time was very great, it was at once perceived that he had it practically within his power to decide the choice; and the friends of both Jackson and Crawford began to pay assiduous court to him. He however promptly declared his intention of using his influence to secure the choice of Adams; whereupon the Jackson party, a few days before the election, publicly accused him of having sold his influence to Adams under a "corrupt bargain," by which Clay was to be given the Secretaryship of State in payment for making Adams

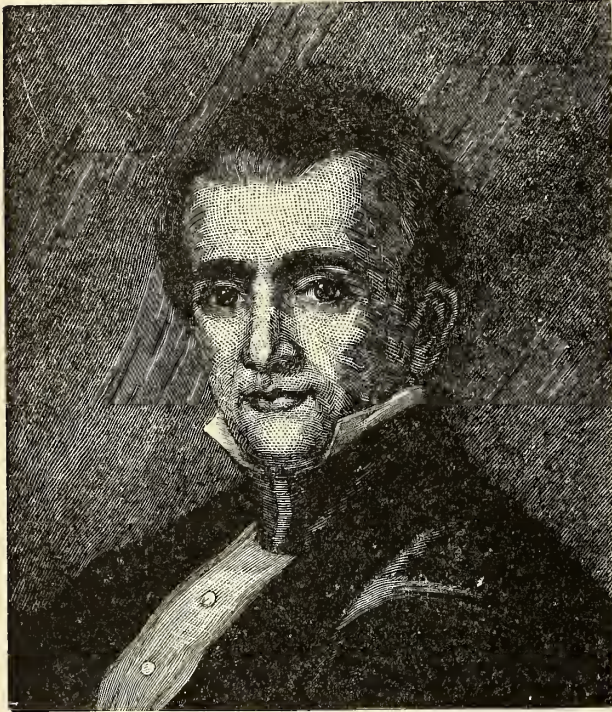
President. Adams was Clay's natural choice, and it was altogether fitting and proper that Clay should take the first place in the cabinet ; but the charge, with ingenious malice, was made *before* the election ; and when the event proved as predicted, the confirmation of what seemed a prophecy was almost irresistible, and it had a tremendous and most damaging effect. For years the cry of "bargain and sale" was never allowed to drop. History has shown that no charge was ever more completely unfounded. It appears to have been a deliberately concocted slander ; yet, in spite of every defense, the injury to Clay's reputation and subsequent career was very great.

In 1829, Jackson succeeded to the Presidency, and for a short season Clay returned to private life in his beautiful Kentucky home ; but he was not long to remain there ; in 1831 he was again elected to the Senate, where he remained until 1842. They were stormy years. In South Carolina the opposition to the protective tariff had led to the promulgation of the famous "nullification" theory,—the doctrine that any State had the power to declare a law of the United States null and void. Jackson, whose anger was thoroughly aroused, dealt with the revolt in summary fashion ; threatening that if any resistance to the government was attempted, he would instantly have the leaders arrested and brought to trial for treason. Nevertheless, to allay the discontent of the South, Clay devised his Compromise Tariff of 1833; under which the duties were gradually reduced, until they reached a minimum of twenty per cent. In 1832 he allowed himself, very unwisely, to be a candidate for the presidency, Jackson's re-election being a foregone conclusion. In 1836 he declined a nomination, and Van Buren was elected. Then followed the panic of 1837, which insured the defeat of the party in power, and the election of the Whig candidate at the following presidential election ; but the popularity of General Jackson had convinced the party managers that success demanded a military hero as a candidate ; and accordingly General Harrison, "the hero of Tippecanoe," was elected, after the famous "Log Cabin and Hard Cider campaign" of 1840. This slight was deeply mortifying to Clay, who had counted with confidence upon being the candidate of the party. "I am the most unfortunate man in the history of parties," he truly remarked : "always run by my friends when sure to be defeated, and now betrayed for a nomination when I, or any one else, would be sure of an election."

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1844.

In 1844, however, Clay's opportunity came at last. He was so obviously the Whig candidate that there was no opposition. The convention met at Baltimore in May, and he was nominated by acclamation, with a shout that shook the building. Everything appeared to indicate success, and his supporters regarded his triumphant election as certain.

But into the politics of the time had come a new factor—the “Liberty party.” This had been hitherto considered unimportant; but the proposed annexation of Texas, which had become a prominent question, was opposed by many in the North who had hitherto voted with the Whig party. Clay was a slaveholder; and though he had opposed the extension of slavery, his record was not satisfactory to those who disapproved of the annexation of Texas. By letters and speeches he endeavored to conciliate them; but he was between two fires; he did not succeed in securing their adherence, while his efforts to do so lost him the support of many with whom annexation was popular. Then, too, his old enemy, Jackson, from his seclusion at the “Hermitage,” wrote letters reviving



JAMES K. POLK.

the old “bargain and corruption” story of 1825. By an audacious fraud, his opponents posed in Pennsylvania as the friends of protection, and the cry of “Polk, Dallas, and the tariff of 1842!” was made to do duty against him. As the campaign progressed, the more clear-sighted among his friends, in spite of his immense popularity, began to feel somewhat less certain of the result. But while the managers noticed the adverse current, the masses of the Whig party firmly expected success to the very last. It seemed impossible to them that Henry Clay could be defeated by James K. Polk. Everything depended on New York. The returns from the interior of the State came in

slowly. There seemed to be still a possibility that heavy Whig majorities in the western counties might overcome the large Democratic vote in the eastern. The suspense was painful. People did not go to bed, watching for the mails. When at last the decisive news went forth which left no doubt of the result, the Whigs broke out in a wail of agony all over the land. “It was,” says Nathan Sargent, “as if the first-born of every family had been stricken down.” The descriptions we have of the grief manifested are almost incredible. Tears flowed in abundance from the eyes of men and women. In the cities and villages the business places were almost deserted for a day or two, people gathering together in

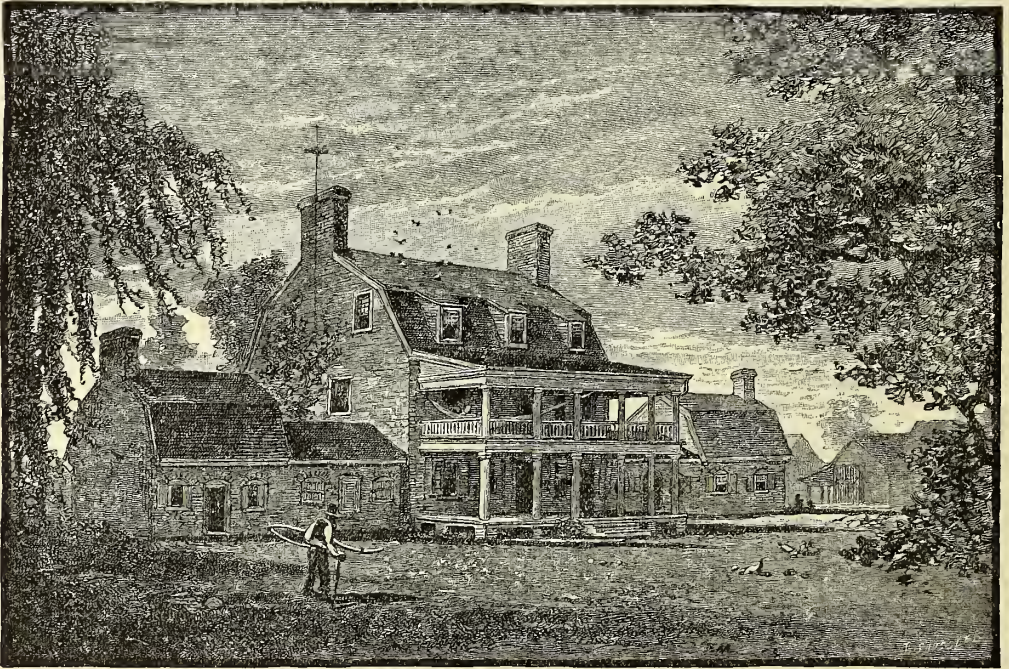
groups to discuss in low tones what had happened. Neither did the victorious Democrats indulge in the usual demonstrations of triumph. There was a feeling as if a great wrong had been done. The Whigs were fairly stunned by their defeat. Many despaired of the republic, sincerely believing that the experiment of popular government had failed forever. Almost all agreed that the great statesmen of the country would thenceforth always remain excluded from the presidency, and that the highest office would be the prize only of second-rate politicians.

During the autumn and early part of the winter of 1844-5 Clay remained at Ashland, receiving and answering a flood of letters from all parts of the United States, and even from Europe, which conveyed to him expressions of condolence and sympathy. Private cares had meanwhile gathered, in addition to his public disappointments. He had for some time been laboring under great pecuniary embarrassment, owing partly to the drafts which are always made upon the purse of a prominent public man, partly to the business failure of one of his sons. Aside from other pressing debts, there was a heavy mortgage resting on Ashland, and, as an old man of sixty-seven, Clay found himself forced to consider whether, in order to satisfy his creditors, it would not be necessary to part with his beloved home. Relief came to him suddenly, and in an unexpected form. When offering a payment to the bank at Lexington, the president informed him that sums of money had arrived from different parts of the country to pay off Henry Clay's debts, and that all the notes and the mortgage were canceled. Clay was deeply moved. "Who did this?" he asked the banker. All the answer he received was that the givers were unknown, but they were presumably "not his enemies." Clay doubted whether he should accept the gift, and consulted some of his friends. They reminded him of the many persons of historic renown who had not refused tokens of admiration and gratitude from their countrymen; and added that, as he could not discover the unknown givers, he could not return the gift; and, as the gift appeared in the shape of a discharged obligation, he could not force the renewal of the debt. At last he consented to accept, and thus was Ashland saved to him.

THE COMPROMISE OF 1850.

The last and greatest public work of Clay's life was the famous Compromise of 1850, which, as has often been said, postponed for ten years the great Civil War. In 1849 he was unanimously elected United States Senator by the Kentucky Legislature, in spite of the well-known fact that his views on the slavery question were distasteful to a large number of his constituents. The truth is that they saw that a storm was gathering, and relied on Clay's wisdom and patriotism to meet the emergency. The sentiment against slavery was increasing. The free States were outstripping the slave States in wealth and popula-

tion. It was evident that slavery must have more territory or die. Shut out of the Northwest by the Missouri Compromise, it was supposed that a great field for its extension had been gained in Texas and the territory acquired from Mexico. But now California, a part of this territory which had been counted upon for slavery, was populated by a sudden rush of Northern immigration, attracted by the discovery of gold ; and a State government was organized, with a constitution excluding slavery. Thus, instead of adding to the area of slavery, the Mexican territory seemed likely to increase the strength of freedom. The South was both alarmed and exasperated. Threats of disunion were freely made. It was evident that prompt measures must be taken to allay the prevail-



RESIDENCE OF A SOUTHERN PLANTER.

ing excitement, if disruption were to be avoided. In such an emergency it was natural that all eyes should turn to the "great pacificator," Henry Clay.

When, at the session of 1849-'50, he appeared in the Senate, to assist, if possible, in removing the slavery question from politics, Clay was an infirm and serious, but not sad, old man of seventy-two. He never lost his cheerfulness or faith, but he felt deeply for his distracted country. During that memorable session of Congress he spoke seventy times. Often extremely sick and feeble, scarcely able, with the assistance of a friend's arm, to climb the steps of the Capitol, he was never absent on the days when the Compromise was to be debated. On the morning on which he began his great speech, he was accom-

panied by a clerical friend, to whom he said, on reaching the long flight of steps leading to the Capitol, "Will you lend me your arm, my friend? for I find myself quite weak and exhausted this morning." Every few steps he was obliged to stop and take breath. "Had you not better defer your speech?" asked the clergyman. "My dear friend," said the dying orator, "I consider our country in danger; and if I can be the means, in any measure, of averting that danger, my health or life is of little consequence." When he rose to speak, it was but too evident that he was unfit for the task he had undertaken. But as he kindled with his subject, his cough left him, and his bent form resumed all its wonted erectness and majesty. He may, in the prime of his strength, have spoken with more energy, but never with so much pathos or grandeur. His speech lasted two days; and though he lived two years longer, he never recovered from the effects of the effort. The thermometer in the Senate chamber marked nearly 100°. Toward the close of the second day, his friends repeatedly proposed an adjournment; but he would not desist until he had given complete utterance to his feelings. He said afterward that he was not sure, if he gave way to an adjournment, that he should ever be able to resume.

Never was Clay's devotion to the Union displayed in such thrilling and pathetic forms as in the course of this long debate. On one occasion allusion was made to a South Carolina hot-head, who had publicly proposed to raise the flag of disunion. When Clay retorted by saying, that, if Mr. Rhett had really meant that proposition, and should follow it up by corresponding acts, he would be a *traitor*, and added, "and I hope he will meet a traitor's fate," thunders of applause broke from the crowded galleries. When the chairman succeeded in restoring silence, Mr. Clay made that celebrated declaration which was so frequently quoted in 1861: "If Kentucky to-morrow shall unfurl the banner of resistance unjustly, I will never fight under that banner. I owe paramount allegiance to the whole Union, a subordinate one to my own State." Again: "The Senator speaks of Virginia being my country. This Union, sir, is my country; the thirty States are my country; Kentucky is my country, and Virginia, no more than any State in the Union." And yet again: "There are those who think that the Union must be preserved by an exclusive reliance upon love and reason. That is not my opinion. I have some confidence in this instrumentality; but, depend upon it, no human government can exist without the power of applying force, and the actual application of it in extreme cases."

"Who can estimate," says Parton, "the influence of these clear and emphatic utterances ten years after? The crowded galleries, the numberless newspaper reports, the quickly succeeding death of the great orator, all aided to give them currency and effect. We shall never know how many wavering minds they aided to decide in 1861. Not that Mr. Clay really believed the conflict would occur: he was mercifully permitted to die in the conviction that the

Compromise of 1850 had removed all immediate danger, and greatly lessened that of the future. Far indeed was he from foreseeing that the ambition of Stephen A. Douglas, a man born in New England, calling himself a disciple of Andrew Jackson, would within five years destroy all compromises, and render all future compromise impossible, by procuring the repeal of the first,—the Missouri Compromise of 1821?"

"Whatever Clay's weaknesses of character and errors in statesmanship may have been," says Schurz, "almost everything he said or did was illumined by a grand conception of the destinies of his country, a glowing national spirit, a lofty patriotism. Whether he thundered against British tyranny on the seas, or urged the recognition of the South American sister republics, or attacked the high-handed conduct of the military chieftain in the Florida war, or advocated protection and internal improvements, or assailed the one-man power and spoils politics in the person of Andrew Jackson, or entreated for compromise and conciliation regarding the tariff or slavery; whether what he advocated was wise or unwise, right or wrong,—there was always ringing through his words a fervid plea for his country, a zealous appeal in behalf of the honor and the future greatness and glory of the Republic, or an anxious warning lest the Union, and with it the greatness and glory of the American people, be put in jeopardy. It was a just judgment which he pronounced upon himself when he wrote: "If any one desires to know the leading and paramount object of my public life, the preservation of the Union will furnish him the key."

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CLAY'S INFLUENCE OVER LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln referred to Henry Clay as "my beau ideal of a statesman". This expression is significant indeed if we would understand the early trend of Lincoln's political philosophy and the loyalty to those ideals which caused him to exclaim that Clay was "the man for whom I fought all my life." One cannot exaggerate the far-reaching influence which Henry Clay exerted over Abraham Lincoln as a youth or the inspiration which continually came to Lincoln throughout the years from the Sage of Ashland and his writings.

When Abraham Lincoln moved with his parents across the Ohio River from Kentucky to Indiana in 1816, there was but one strong political party in the United States. The Jeffersonian Republicans in 1805 had changed their name to Democrats. Their opponents, the Federalists, had collapsed as an organized group by 1812, and were so completely routed that James Monroe was almost unanimously elected President in 1820, but one electoral vote being cast against him. It was then that Jackson wrote to President Monroe saying, "Now is the time to exterminate that political monster called Party Spirit." Practically all Americans were then in the one party sometimes known as the Jeffersonian Republican party and later called the Jeffersonian Democrats.

The year Abraham Lincoln was born, 1809, Henry Clay was serving as a Senator from Lincoln's native state, Kentucky. Clay first entered politics in 1803 and steadily advanced until he occupied the speaker's chair in the lower branch of congress, and by 1824 he was a candidate for the Presidency.

The first Presidential campaign which Abraham Lincoln could have observed with any intelligent interest was the campaign of 1824 which occurred when he was fifteen years old. This was a struggle between great leaders rather than a contest of political parties. Three of the four candidates for President, Jackson, Clay, and Adams, were bitter personal enemies. Crawford also ran. The political units were called after the names of the respective candidates, and the Adams group was often referred to as the anti-Jackson party.

During the bitter campaign of 1824 the *Western Sun* published at Vincennes was printing in full the speeches of Henry Clay. In the issues of the paper preceding the election ten Clay speeches appeared, some of them extending through eight columns of fine print. These papers are known to have been available to the Lincoln family then living in Spencer County. In this campaign Clay spoke against the extension of slavery and expounded his well-known propositions on protection and internal improvements which became known as the American System.

At the impressionable age of fifteen Abraham Lincoln was beginning to form certain opinions with respect to the conduct of public affairs, and these were to become the basic elements in his theory of government. William Wood, a friend of the youthful Lincoln, tells us that the boy wrote out a remarkable discussion dealing with our political institutions, and it became the talk of the neighborhood. It is evident that Lincoln never wandered very far away from the principles advocated by Henry Clay in the campaign speeches of 1824.

Adams was elected to the Presidency in 1824, and Clay was made his Secretary of State which placed his name continually before the people. Lincoln was not old enough to vote in the 1828 campaign won by Jackson, but in 1832 he cast his first Presidential vote for his favorite, Henry Clay.

The *Sangamon Journal* published at Springfield became Lincoln's medium of information with reference to the 1832 Presidential campaign. In the issue of January 5, he read the caption, "Henry Clay for President." On Febru-

ary 23, Clay's famous speech to the senate was reported, and in three consecutive issues, March 22, March 29, and April 5, Clay's defense of the American System was printed. Lincoln's own defeat as a candidate for the legislature at this time could not have pained him more than the failure of Clay to gain the Presidency.

The best evidence we now have would indicate that from this very first contest in which Clay appeared, Abraham Lincoln's sympathies were with the famous Whig leader from his native state. When Lincoln corrected a biography which speaks of his early political affiliations, he stated that he was "a staunch anti-Jackson or Clay man," and this is the same Clay for whom he said he had fought "all his life."

One of Lincoln's most notable fights for Clay was in the election of 1844 when, as presidential elector for Clay in Illinois, Lincoln not only canvassed the state but also went down into southern Indiana on behalf of the candidacy of his hero.

It must have been a glorious occasion when Lincoln had an opportunity to meet this hero of his youth. The only vacation Abraham Lincoln is known to have taken extended over a period of three weeks spent in the home town of Henry Clay, Lexington, Kentucky. This was the home of Lincoln's wife, Mary Todd, who herself was a great admirer of Clay. Mr. Clay was a very close friend of her father, Robert S. Todd.

Here in Lexington, on November 13, 1847 Lincoln heard Henry Clay give a remarkable lecture on The Conduct of The Mexican War, and the impression it left on Lincoln is evident from his reaction to the question in the next congress. How often Lincoln may have visited Mr. Clay during this Lexington sojourn is not known, but it is very likely that there were several personal contacts. Abraham Lincoln's eulogy on Henry Clay at the time of his death is one of Lincoln's best known speeches.

A letter written by Henry Clay in 1844 was recently acquired by the Lincoln National Life Foundation from which this excerpt has been taken: "My wife's maiden name was Hart. Her father was Col. Thomas Hart who had two brothers, one named David, and the other named Nathaniel. Their residence was North Carolina near Hillsborough. During the revolutionary war Col. Thomas Hart removed to the state of Maryland, and about the year 1794 removed to Lexington in Kentucky where in 1799 I married my wife."

It was the family history in this letter which recalled the beautiful tribute in which Abraham Lincoln sent greetings to the widow of the lamented Clay, a tribute which also reveals the real esteem in which Abraham Lincoln always held Henry Clay, the Sage of Ashland, who exerted such a great influence over him.

Executive Mansion
Washington, August 9, 1862

Mr. John M. Clay.
My dear Sir:

The snuff-box you sent, with the accompanying note, was received yesterday. Thanks for this memento of your great and patriotic father—Thanks also for the assurance that, in these days of dereliction, you remain true to his principles—In the concurrent sentiment of your venerable mother, so long the partner of his bosom and his honors, and lingering now, where he was, but for the call to rejoin him where he is, I recognize his voice, speaking as it ever spoke, for the Union, the Constitution, and the freedom of mankind.

Your Obt Servt
A. Lincoln

THE
MONTH

May
1939



CLAY'S ASHLAND

IN the year 1806, when he was about thirty years old, H. Clay, Esquire, quondam "Mill Boy of the Slashes," moved out of town to a country seat which he called Ashland, from the tall trees that grew upon it. It was the proper move for a successful young lawyer of the Blue Grass. From Ashland he could see the cupola of Fayette Court House and Lexington was but a mile and a half north. Ashland at first was simplicity itself, but as Henry Clay prospered he had Benjamin Latrobe design him a spacious, brick mansion, with ells, screened by shrubbery, and surrounded by wooded paths. In time Ashland comprised six hundred acres, with eighteen slaves, blooded cattle, and sixty-five horses, including "the celebrated imported turf horse Buzzard" at \$5500. Growing to a fame comparable to that of Mount Vernon, Monticello, the Hermitage, and a certain country place in Hyde Park, Ashland became a Mecca of politicians as the career of its lord—who had been introduced to Congress as "the Cock of Kentucky"—led him on to eminence second to none of his time and country.

We hope the charm of this line engraving by John Sartain is in some degree conveyed by our halftone repro-

duction, though of course the rich and mellow hand-color- *AT GOOD-*
ing is lost in the translation. The view was "Drawn by *SPEED'S*
James Hamilton, after Daguerreotypes taken on the spot
by J. M. Hewitt." Sartain's engraving after Hamilton was
printed by James Irwin of Philadelphia and "Published
by F. Hegan, Louisville, Ky., 1853," the year after Clay's
death. The engraved surface measures about 15 by 27
inches, not including the vignette portrait of Clay, the
symbolic figures of Commerce and Agriculture, and the
title—"Ashland, the Homestead of Henry Clay." The mar-
gins all round are ample and the condition excellent. \$60.

THE BIG WHIG

BIGGER than the Clay homestead at Ashland but not
so homey-looking is the Massachusetts State House,
the gilded dome of which shone down on the "Whig Mass
Meeting on Boston Common, Sept. 19th, 1844," portrayed
in a tinted lithograph published by Thayer & Co.'s Lith-
ography in Boston that year. The title continues: "Return
of the Procession. Respectfully inscribed to Clay Club No.
1, Boston." The artist was J. Sheldon, Jr. The lithograph
measures about 12¼ by 21¼ inches, and the margins at
top and sides are good, though the bottom margin is
trimmed as far as (but not into) the descending letters of
the lowest line of text. The copy is clean, the tint blue, and
to the right you see the spire of Park Street Church, which
Henry James is reported to have called "the most interest-
ing pile of brick and mortar in America." In the presiden-
tial election of 1844, the candidates were the Whig, Clay,
against the Democrat, Polk. Clay's position on slavery and
the annexation of Texas lost him the election, a bitter dis-
appointment not only to him but, in the words of Rhodes,
to "the educated and respectable classes of society." The
Thayer lithograph of the Whig mass meeting—\$40.

"MONTAUK" OFF MESSINA

THE fine marine painting on our front cover shows the
"Ship Montauk, Captn. H. A. Brightman, Sailing
from Messina, Dec. 24th, 1852." The artist's signature in
the lower right seems to be "Tavilla" or "Tauilla," con-
jecturally one of the more talented European ship-por-

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LINCOLN CAMPAIGNS FOR CLAY

Ninety-five years ago at this season Abraham Lincoln, a presidential elector of Illinois, was actively engaged in campaigning for Henry Clay. Lincoln even went into Indiana on a speaking itinerary, thinking that he might help the Whig cause in the community where he lived as a growing boy.

For one quarter of his life Lincoln resided in Spencer county, Indiana, moving there with his parents when he was seven years of age and remaining until he was twenty-one, at which time the family migrated to Illinois. He had not visited his boyhood home for fourteen years until he appeared there as a speaker for Clay.

The Abraham Lincoln who came back to visit his old friends was now a married man with one child and he owned a home in Springfield. Just a month before his visit he had formed a new legal alliance, withdrawing as junior partner of the Logan-Lincoln law firm and becoming the senior member of the Lincoln-Herndon partnership.

Lincoln made several addresses in Indiana, visiting Vincennes, Bruceville, Washington, Rockport, Carter Township, Gentryville, Boonville, and Evansville. On October 30 he spoke in the Spencer County Court House at Rockport, and the local newspaper made favorable mention of his address.

It was at Gentryville, however, that he must have met most of his old friends and among them was William Jones who had greatly influenced Abraham's own political thinking.

The Clay campaign was one of the most unusual political contests in early American history. On one ticket was Clay who probably had a larger personal following than any other man of his day. He was opposed by Polk who had few personal admirers, and also by one other candidate in the field.

It is very difficult in this modern day to appreciate the unusual loyalty which was displayed by the followers of Clay. Lincoln called him "My beau ideal of a statesman," and he found in his old friend William Jones of Gentryville one who was even more enthusiastic about Clay than he was, if that were possible. In *The Evansville Daily Journal* for July 19, 1860 there is a story of Jones' physical collapse after the defeat of Clay which is a good example of the great disappointment which came over so many of the voters.

"William Jones is an old citizen of the county who has taken little active part in politics since the Clay and Polk campaign and who on learning of the defeat of his favorite in that memorable contest was for several days incapacitated for attending to his usual business."

Clay received a great many letters of condolence after his defeat and the excerpts from a few of them which follow will convince one that his power of attraction was unusual indeed, and it is not strange that Lincoln worshipped at his shrine.

"The deplorable result of the late election, has here, as every where, filled the hearts of your Whig friends with pain and mortification, and this feeling has not been con-

fined to the voters only, but has extended itself through all ages, sexes, and conditions, from 'lispering infancy to hoary age'.

"We were not aware, until we saw our anticipations of your success blighted, how strong a hold you had upon our affections, and we now feel that you are President in the hearts of a vast majority of the intelligent and patriotic citizens of the country, where you can never be defeated, and where the poisonous shafts of calumny can never reach you." P. S. Galpin and Others.

"Dear Sir,—My sense of the public calamity has, for some days, absorbed all emotions and affections of a private or personal character. I have been astonished with the result of the elections. The ways of nations, like those of Providence, are sometimes mysterious and inscrutable; and what our country has just done is of this sort." William C. Preston

"My Dear Mr. Clay; my chief, my old master, my venerated and beloved friend!

"... I have received the news, just arrived, of the result of the Presidential election. Great God! is it possible! Have our people given this astonishing, this alarming proof of the madness to which party frenzy can carry them!" ...

"Again and again, may God bless and preserve you. I write incoherently: you would not believe my emotion. My head is confused." Christopher Hughes.

"It is from the gushing out and fullness of our hearts that we say to you that you have been our political idol, and that we esteem you as highly, and love you as dearly as we ever have done—in defeat, more than in victory—we can not say more, how can we say less?"

P. H. Sylvester and Others.

"I well recollect in the family circle while a boy, sitting around the domestic hearth, hearing my father recount your patriotic deeds. One sentence from a speech of yours, 'The colors that float from the mast head should be the credentials of our seamen', was indelibly fixed on my mind. Then judge my deep mortification and disappointment to find the sailors' friend, the master-spirit of the late war, 'the noblest Roman of them all,' rejected by the American people."

John H. Westwood.

"Dear Sir,—At the very moment that I learned the disastrous result of the Presidential contest, I determined to write to you; but I soon perceived that I felt too strongly to express myself with any thing like calmness, and on that account I have delayed till now to condole with you on our unexpected misfortune."

A. B. Roman.

"I have never before witnessed such disappointment, distress, and disgust. The feeling seemed to pervade all classes. I have heard men of the opposite faction express their regret at the success of their party. A gray-headed man assured me that he could not restrain his tears. My own child wept bitterly."

Dr. Mercer.

"With other men, to be defeated was to be forgotten; but with him defeat was but a trifling incident, neither changing him nor the world's estimate of him... The spell—the long-enduring spell—with which the souls of men were bound to him is a miracle. Who can compass it?" A. Lincoln.

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HENRY CLAY, LINCOLN'S POLITICAL IDOL—BIBLIOGRAPHY

One hundred years ago this Spring, on March 2, 1844, a flag was raised over a Whig cabin, in Springfield, Illinois, and a great assemblage gathered there to celebrate the victory of the Whigs in the state of Maryland. The Whig choir sang and Abraham Lincoln was one of the speakers. Lincoln had been made an elector for Henry Clay, the Whig's candidate for the presidency, and a speaking itinerary was arranged for him that eventually took him as far away as his old home in Indiana.

There has been much speculation with reference to the book which may have contributed most to Lincoln's development as a statesman. Aside from its moral precepts, the diction of the Bible, he absorbed from his mother's daily reading, was undoubtedly an important factor in his manner of expression. The spirit of the Revolutionary fathers which the youth, Lincoln, captured from reading Weems' Washington was his chief inspirational source. His early political notions were formed by reading the life and works of Henry Clay.

It is doubtful if any statesman influenced Abraham Lincoln quite so much as Henry Clay, and "The Railsplitter" became a recognized champion of "The Millboy of the Slashes." After Clay had passed away, people who heard Lincoln's speeches remarked that his was the voice of Henry Clay speaking again to the people.

Two biographies about Clay seem to have been Lincoln's chief source of information and reference, during the Illinois years, a small book by Prentice, first printed in 1830, and a very large book by Epes Sargent, published in 1854. The Sargent book had been published in two volumes in 1843, but in 1853 J. L. Gihon issued the two volumes under one cover, and a year later Leary & Getz put out a facsimile of it. The one bearing the latter imprint with date 1854, is similar to the Clay life used by Lincoln during the Lincoln-Douglas debates.

What is said to be the identical copy of this last mentioned book used by Lincoln, is still extant and the editor of *Lincoln Lore* has had the privilege of examining it. There are many passages which have been underlined throughout the book, as if a careful student of Clay had read it from cover to cover. Lincoln often underscored important passages and these lines of emphasis may be his. The book finally came into the hands of Major Lambert, and when his collection was sold at auction, this book was acquired by E. D. Worth, for the sum of \$450.

This bulletin is one of a series which has presented some fragmentary bibliographies of books eligible for a place in a Lincoln collateral library. The following titles may serve as a reference list to those interested in the life and works of Henry Clay.

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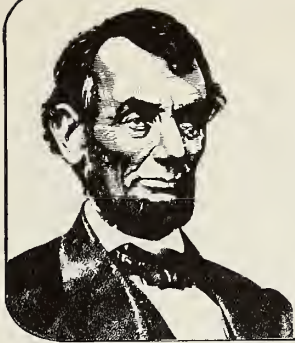
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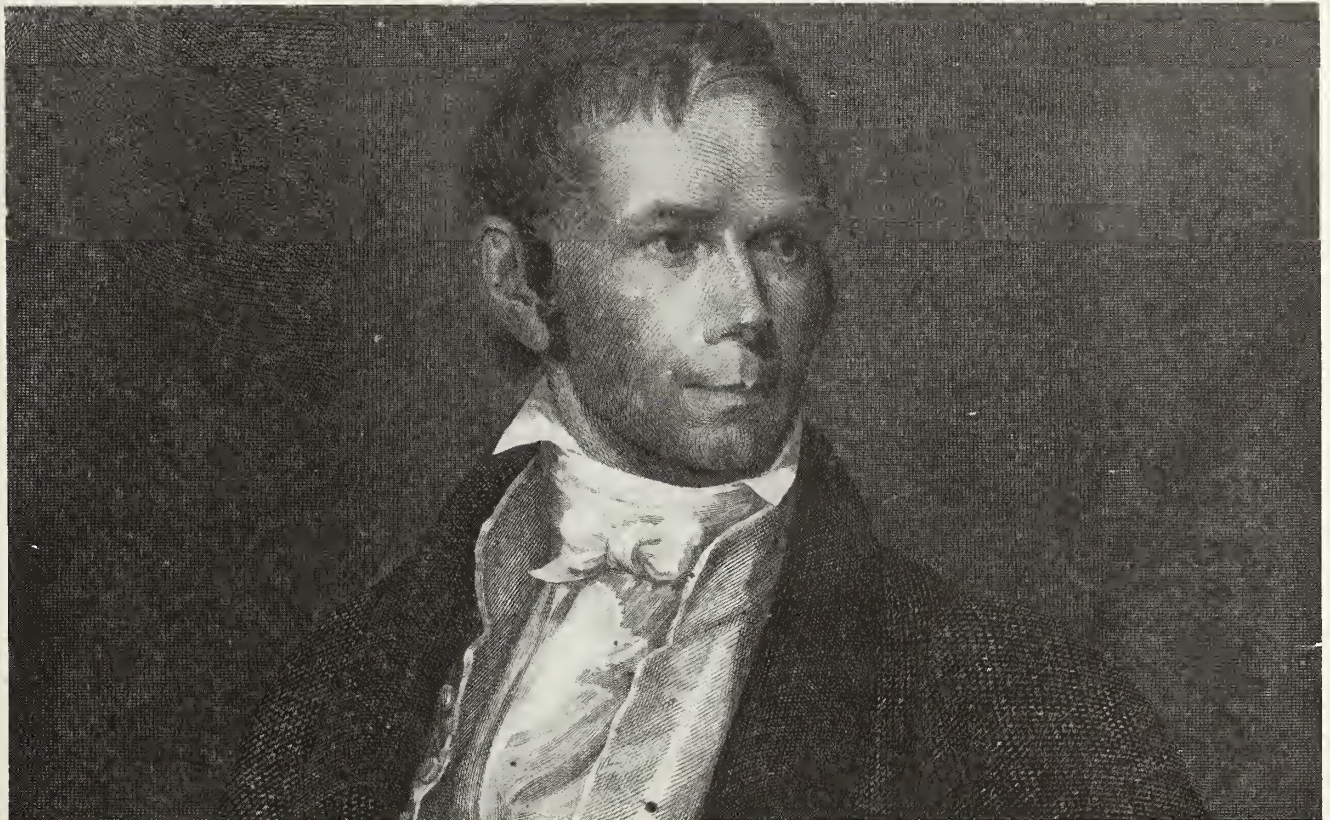
Number 1631

HENRY CLAY'S FIRST BIOGRAPHER

Henry Clay was a successful politician and the representative of a border state; therefore, he was a man of contradictions. He was a Jeffersonian Republican whom Jefferson himself criticized, a slaveholder who professed hatred of slavery as a moral evil, a "War Hawk" who feared military leaders as presidential candidates, and an apologist and counsel for the Second Bank of the United States who had claimed that the First Bank of the United States was unconstitutional. The Whig party, of which Clay became a leader, held many former Federalists who detested dueling, if for no other reason than because it had caused the death of Alexander Hamilton; Clay himself, however, fought two duels. For some, he was "Gallant Harry of the West"; for others, he was "the western Judas."

Abraham Lincoln's admiration for Henry Clay is much fabled but little analyzed. From statements he made

(mostly after Clay's death in 1852), we do know how Lincoln resolved many of the contradictions in Clay's character, but not all. We know less than we should about what Lincoln knew about Clay when both men were still alive and their Whig party was still alive. In fact, of some ten thousand items of Lincolniana in the Lincoln Library and Museum, only two short pamphlets written almost one hundred years apart focus exclusively on the subject of Lincoln's relationship with Henry Clay. Significantly, one argues that Lincoln was "a political disciple of Clay"; the other argues that they held opposite political principles. Few today hold the latter position, and indeed the charge was a part of the campaign of 1860 and not the judgment of history. Nevertheless, we do not know specifically the sources from which Lincoln gained his early knowledge of and admiration for Clay. Without knowing how much he knew of



Engraving From The Lincoln National Life Foundation

Henry Clay (1777-1852) was born in Virginia in a modest story-and-a-half frame house. Daniel Webster tried to meet the era of the common man half-way by saying "it did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were." Although it is nowhere recorded that Clay tried to transform his frame house into a log cabin, he was fond of dwelling on his early years as a penniless and uneducated orphan. Actually, his father was a minister, and his mother, who remarried after the death of Clay's father, was hardly penniless. George Prentice chose to mention Clay's rags-to-riches story only in passing; it got greater emphasis from later biographers. The above engraving shows Clay at the age of 44 as a well-dressed legislator long removed from any humble origins. Perhaps such portraits forced Prentice to say of Clay that the "curse of aristocracy has never chilled the warm flow of his natural feelings."

this complicated man, we cannot be certain of the reasons why Clay appealed to Lincoln.

A number of Lincoln students have attributed Lincoln's early knowledge of Clay to his reading the *Biography of Henry Clay* written by Clay's earliest biographer, George D. Prentice, and published in Hartford, Connecticut in 1831 by Samuel Hammer, Jr. and John Jay Phelps. Charles Carleton Coffin's *Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1893) made the most specific and extravagant claim: "... Mr. Prentice went to Kentucky and prepared a life of Mr. Clay, a copy of which fell into the hands of the young postmaster at New Salem, who read it with great care, and who accepted the political principles of the Kentucky statesman." On the strength of Coffin's statement, M. L. Houser, one of four important experts on Lincoln's reading, included Prentice among the biographers whom Lincoln read, though he called Prentice's book *The Life of Henry Clay*. In *Lincoln's Education and Other Essays* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1957), Houser asserted that in "Indiana, young Lincoln read various campaign biographies of his hero; at New Salem, the Prentice work."

As early as 1866, J. G. Holland in his *Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Massachusetts: Gurdon Bill) asserted that Lincoln "had the early privilege of reading ... a Life of Henry Clay which his mother had managed to purchase for him." Holland made no claim that it was Prentice's work; indeed, it could not have been, for Nancy Hanks Lincoln died thirteen years before its publication. Perhaps this statement led later students to believe that Lincoln read Prentice's biography simply because it was the earliest biography of Clay and, by virtue of its date, the only likely candidate to be Holland's volume. H. E. Barker, another student of Lincoln's reading, fell into precisely this trap. He concluded that Lincoln read Prentice's book because: (1) Holland said he did, (2) the life of Clay in the sale of Lincoln's personal library was published in 1853, (3) Prentice's biography was written early enough to have been read by Lincoln in his formative years as a political thinker, and (4) Lincoln was known to have read Prentice's newspaper, the *Louisville Journal*, regularly.

The most frequently quoted evidence from those who knew Lincoln personally in the time when he might well have read Prentice's book comes from Dennis Hanks. Hanks claimed that "Abe turned Whig in 1827-8" because he "allways Loved Hen Clay's Speeches I think was the Cause Mostly." By "Whig" Hanks probably meant National Republican, or so Albert Beveridge tells us, as there was no Whig party in 1828. Even so, there are other difficulties with the statement, not the least of which is that Hanks himself contradicted it. In a letter to Herndon, he claimed that Lincoln did not "Turn Whig" until "After He cum to Illinois aBout 1830." Lincoln may have known Clay's speeches from newspapers or pamphlets, but Prentice's book was a biography and did not reproduce Clay's speeches at length. There seems to be no way to twist Hanks's testimony into endorsement of the assertion that Lincoln read Prentice's *Biography of Henry Clay*.

It is, of course, not implausible that Lincoln might have read the Prentice book, but there does not seem to be any solid documentary proof for the contention. At the very least, the burden of proof rests with those who assert that Lincoln did read the book, since they rely mostly on each other for statements that Lincoln read the book. Disagreements on details abound; William Townsend even claims it was a two-volume work.

However controversial the proofs cited by students of Lincoln's reading are, the most remarkable thing about their works is their lack of interest in the question of what Lincoln learned or might have learned from the books they are so anxious to prove he read. It is much easier for the Lincoln student to find lists of titles Lincoln read than to find studies of what Lincoln took from the books and what he ignored and contradicted. In part, this stems from the power of Abraham Lincoln as a national symbol. Every book documented as read becomes further proof that his greatness stemmed from his being a self-made man. With less than a year's formal schooling, just look, these studies say implicitly, at what an education Lincoln got anyway. To this powerful didactic impulse must be added the historical disci-

pline's ability for self-generation. Once someone has concerned himself with the problem, and a literature on it has been built up, more literature gets written on the subject of that body of literature itself — whether the problem as originally formulated was properly conceived or not. From these two factors come our concern about and knowledge of what titles Lincoln read and our relative unconcern over what was in the pages beneath the titles.

It also seems clear that the direction the literature on Lincoln's reading has gone to date is explained by two assumptions that lay behind the reasoning of men like Barker and Houser: Lincoln was a great reader, and to be a great reader was to have read a large number of books. The first statement is controversial in itself; William Herndon and John Hay both disputed it. But the second may be the one that has betrayed historians the most, for it is not at all clear how readily available books were in Lincoln's early environment. Yet the presumption has always been in favor of the view that Lincoln read many books. Barker, for example, reasoned that since the Clay biography in Lincoln's library was published in 1853, therefore Holland must have referred to Prentice's earlier work. Why not just assume that Holland was wrong? He cited no evidence; neither did Coffin; Houser cited Coffin; and so it went. The question became which book he read rather than whether he read it at all. Dennis Hanks may prove to be the best source of all; he said only that Lincoln knew Clay's speeches. These were more readily available than biographies, for they were printed in newspapers and circulated in cheap pamphlet form for political purposes. Lincoln was no less a reader for having read the speech itself rather than George Prentice's abbreviated and biased report of the speech. But to think of Lincoln as a reader of newspapers and pamphlets rather than books is to think of him in a way that early biographers and creators of national symbols dreaded, for it is to think of him as a politician. Proof, again, lies in the availability of literature on what books he read and in the paucity of literature on what was in the books and, in a sense, in the culture around Lincoln. To compile the former is to be concerned about the symbolic Lincoln; to study the latter is to be concerned about the historical Lincoln.

To explain the general confusion in regard to Lincoln's reading in the above way is, of course, to oversimplify a complicated question. Houser, for example, included an essay on Abraham Lincoln as "Practical Politician" in his collection of articles, *Lincoln's Education and Other Essays*. Yet he betrayed the didactic purpose which underlay his other efforts to discover what Lincoln read in the very first sentence of his essay on the "Practical Politician": "From the time of their first coming to America, the Lincoln family numbered among its members many major and minor politician statesmen." The awkwardness embodied in that piling up of nouns at the end of the sentence — "politician statesmen" — betrays Houser's fundamental uneasiness with the idea of conceiving of Lincoln as a politician. Moreover, to explain the confused state of the literature on Lincoln's reading as a part of a deeper fear of seeing him in political terms ignores the important purpose of some of the work on Lincoln's reading; some of it was done to help librarians and book collectors. Even granting the need for qualification of the judgment, one is still left with that judgment as the most satisfactory explanation for the strange story of George Prentice's *Biography of Henry Clay* and Abraham Lincoln.

To pursue an analysis of Prentice's *Biography of Henry Clay* from the standpoint of the question of what Lincoln could have learned from it, if he did read it, is bound to appear as something of an anticlimax. To make it appear so is to do a disservice to the book, for it is a remarkable production in many ways. For one thing, a small controversy around the book concerns the possibility that John Greenleaf Whittier may have written parts of it when sheets of Prentice's script were delayed or lost in the mail en route to the New England publishers. For another, as the first biography of Henry Clay, Prentice's book did much to set the tone for many of Clay's subsequent biographers, even ones who wrote over a hundred years later. Finally, the book is simply a bit above the run-of-the-mill campaign biography.

Prentice attempted to answer Clay's critics directly rather than by creating the impression that Clay was a man of whom no one in his right mind could be critical, and Prentice himself occasionally criticized Clay in the book.

Nevertheless, the circumstances of the origin of the book clearly suggest that Prentice's biography was written to promote Clay more than to understand him. Prentice was a newspaperman. Clay's friends, according to Betty Carolyn Congleton's study of "George D. Prentice: Nineteenth Century Southern Editor" in *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, LXV (April, 1967), 94-119, engaged Prentice to come from Hartford, Connecticut to write the biography because they wanted to promote him as a presidential candidate. Prentice worked fast; engaged to do the job in the spring of 1830, he had finished by November.

The origins being what they were, the book was perhaps surprisingly critical of Clay. The "Preface," in fact, sounds almost bitter. There Prentice explained that he had talked personally to Clay, but that Clay told him less than he might have for the very reason that he knew Prentice was writing his biography. When Prentice's publishers wrote Clay to ask permission to publish the book, Clay answered by stating "that, as his acts were before his fellow-citizens, he could properly exercise no censorship or control over the comments, either of friends or enemies; but, that he must frankly acknowledge the repugnance of his own private feelings to the contemplated publication." "Had I read this answer in season," said Prentice, "I should have remained in New-England."

Prentice's "Preface" may have been only a strategy to suggest his independence of judgment, but there are at least three indications in the biography that he did not write strictly a propaganda piece. First, in describing Clay's early success at the Kentucky bar, Prentice rather candidly pointed out that Clay won a case with a specious argument. "Such a decision," Prentice said of the court's judgment in the case, "could not now be obtained in Kentucky, and, at the period in question, was obviously contrary to law." By stating his reservations in such a manner, moreover, the New Englander flattered the state in which he had recently taken up residence and in which he would soon find permanent employment as editor of the *Louisville Journal*.

Second, Prentice did mention Henry Clay's duel with Humphrey Marshall in 1808, a duel resulting from a quarrel over a resolution Clay introduced in the Kentucky legislature that would have required the members to wear "garments of domestick manufacture." Here Prentice stated his independence in no uncertain terms: "It is the legitimate province of the biographer to state facts, and not to apologize for error. We believe that duelling, in all its forms, should be reprobated. We have no doubt, that Mr. Clay erred in this affair with Mr. Marshall, and it is said, that he himself looks back to the incident with disapprobation and regret. . . ." Nevertheless, Prentice did find for "Mr. C.'s admirers, . . . much consolation in the fact, that the quarrel which led to the catastrophe, had its origin in his devotion to the policy of encouraging domestick manufactures — a policy which . . . has done so much for the prosperity of the nation." Prentice also found, in the otherwise unfortunate episode, proof of Clay's "personal courage." He saw the duel as mitigated by the primitive circumstances which produced "the laws of honour, which every Kentuckian of that day was taught to reverence." Clay may have regretted the Marshall duel, but the early Kentucky code of honor lingered to cause a later duel, fought just four years before Prentice wrote his book. On April 8, 1826, Clay exchanged two shots with the brilliant, but eccentric John Randolph, who disguised his silhouette by wearing a loose-fitting sort of robe and provided too vague a target for Clay to hit. This later farcical contest Prentice chose to shunt off into an appendix following the body of the biography.

Third, Prentice was most outspoken in his criticism of a legal case involving Clay and the institution of slavery. Clay acted as prosecutor of a Negro slave accused of murder. The slave was a trusted servant unused to corporal punishment. When, during an absence of his master, a young overseer struck him, the slave killed the man in a fit of passion. Prentice held firmly

that the case "had all the distinguishing characteristics of manslaughter, having been committed in a moment of sudden exasperation, and without the shadow of previous malice. The offence, if the perpetrator had been a white man, would have been . . . clearly a case of manslaughter. . . ." Clay argued, however, "that, although a white man, who, in a fit of rage on account of personal chastisement killed his assailant, would be guilty of manslaughter and not murder, a slave could plead no such mitigation . . . inasmuch as it is the duty of slaves to submit to punishment." Prentice had "not a doubt, that this argument was directly opposed to the true spirit of the law. . . . The particular law which distinguishes manslaughter from murder, has no reference to the duties of the offender, but has its whole foundation in the indulgence, which has been thought due to those weaknesses and passions of human nature, which lead to the violation of duties."

Again, Prentice sought mitigating circumstances. Clay customarily appeared for the defendant, but in this one case wound up in the prosecutor's role because he was trying to get a friend the job as prosecuting attorney. The court rejected the friend but offered the job to Clay, who accepted it because he would be able to transfer the job to his friend at a future date. The murder case arose before the transfer took place. Clay did not witness the execution, and Prentice had "heard him remark, that he regretted the part he had taken in procuring the conviction of this poor slave, more than any other act of his professional life."

Make no mistake about it, however; Prentice's book for the most part is a brief for Henry Clay. A consistent theme of the book from preface to conclusion was specifically partisan. The theme began as an apologia for biographies of civil figures. "I am not unaware," said Prentice as he introduced his work, "that the written history of a man, whose life exhibits no adventures, save those of an intellectual character, is seldom read with that enthusiasm, which is generally called forth by the story even of a second rate chieftan." Nevertheless, Prentice announced that Henry Clay was "a man . . . whose moral and mental history should be regarded as a portion of the common riches of the human race — one of those noble-minded existences, from whom the world's happiness and glory are yet to spring; and there is more profit in scanning the mind of such a being — in marking the origin, the combination, and the development of its powerful elements — than in contemplating the successes of all the military conquerors, from Alexander to Napoleon." Fifteen years after Waterloo, Napoleon was much on the American as well as the European mind, and contrasts with Napoleonic military glory did not hurt a political figure's reputation.

Even more on the American mind was the specter of an American chieftan, Andrew Jackson. Thus a consistent theme of Clay's life meshed perfectly with the stance Prentice took as the biographer of a civilian whose adventures were all of the mind (excluding a couple of minor duels, of course, in which no one was hurt). Clay's career of attacking Jackson began as early as 1818, when he denounced Jackson's role in the Seminole War in a speech in the House of Representatives. Prentice echoed Clay's attack on Jackson's actions in no uncertain terms. The war in 1818 was caused by the harshness of the treaty made with the Indians in 1814, following a war in which Jackson had also been the victorious general. "By this treaty," said Prentice, "the American general subjected the miserable natives to terms more odious and tyrannical, than even the Goths and Vandals . . . were ever known to impose upon a conquered people. Although the condition of the Indians was so pitiable, that our people were absolutely required to save them from starvation by gratuitous supplies of bread; although they were bending down before us as humbly and as helplessly as they could have knelt before their God — the chieftan-conqueror, forgetting, perhaps the eternal principles of justice and mercy in the intensity of his patriotism; refused to grant them peace, unless they would yield a large portion of their territory, convey to the United States important powers and privileges over the remainder, and surrender into his hands the prophets of their nation . . . not one of the hostile chiefs, who, with their followers, constituted at least two thirds

of the nation, affixed his mark to the instrument." The treaty violated the ninth article of the Treaty of Ghent with England, which stipulated that war with the Indians (fighting at the time of the Treaty) must cease and that their lands must be restored. Prentice ended with a judgment on Jackson's Indian treaty that would have shaken the frontier: "... its whole character was so manifestly oppressive, that the poor Indians who were the victims of it, had, if we mistake not, a right, under the immutable laws of nature, to rise at the first opportunity, and redeem themselves from vassalage."

As if the conclusion of the first war were not enough, the second witnessed, according to Prentice, even greater outrages on the part of General Jackson. He massacred Indian prisoners; he executed two British citizens, one of them in direct defiance of the sentence of a court martial Jackson had himself instituted; and he attacked and occupied a Spanish fortress.

In 1830, the anti-military theme was even more specifically partisan; Jackson was not only a one-time enemy of Clay, but also the President and Clay's most likely opponent if the latter were to run in 1832. The consistency of this partisan theme in the book should never be ignored. It should also be noted, however, that Prentice incidentally pointed to a theme in Clay's views on Indian policy which was largely ignored even by twentieth-century biographers and has only recently begun to attract the interest of historians of the Whig party (see, for example, Daniel Walker Howe, ed., *The American Whigs* [New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973]).

Prentice's interest in proving that Clay was a Jeffersonian may surprise those whose view of the Whig party stems largely from acquaintance with Daniel Webster's thought. Prentice stated flatly that Jefferson was "the man from whom he [Clay] had learned his own political principles." And Prentice urged this in the face of some obstacles thrown in the way by his own book. To urge Clay's Jeffersonianism was to be at odds with Clay's other great distinguishing characteristics in Prentice's scheme: his consistent advocacy of a national system of internal improvements and protective tariffs. The biographer himself duly noted the problem: "It was the opinion of Mr. Jefferson, as expressed in one of his messages to congress, that, under the constitution, roads and canals could not be constructed by the general government, without the consent of the state or states through which they were to pass." Moreover, James Madison, who clearly had a stronger claim than Clay to being the inheritor of the Jeffersonian mantle, had also "stated his convictions . . . that Internal Improvements were not within the constitutional power of the government." Modern biographers simply note with irony what for Prentice was an insoluble anomaly. Nor did Prentice note what Clement Eaton did in 1957 (in *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics* [Boston: Little, Brown]), that Jefferson condemned Clay in 1818 for "rallying an opposition to the [Monroe] administration."

What is perhaps most notable for Lincoln students about Prentice's brand of Clay partisanship is its peculiarly Northern hue. It has already been noted that Clay's successful prosecution of a slave for murder gained Prentice's critical denunciation. This anti-slavery stance permeated the whole book. Writing in 1937, Glyndon G. Van Deusen in *The Life of Henry Clay* (Boston: Little, Brown) found Clay's career of involvement with the slavery question a rather checkered one. Even in the first stages of the Missouri controversy, from which Clay would ultimately emerge as a symbol of compromise, the Kentuckian appeared as an ardent champion of strictly Southern interests. Van Deusen summarized Clay's position on the crisis as of 1819 this way: "He expounded volubly the old Jeffersonian argument of mitigation by diffusion [thus supporting slavery expansion into the West], extolled the black slavery of Kentucky as contrasted with the 'white slavery' of the North, and stood staunchly for states' rights, using the argument later made famous by William Pinkney's demand that Missouri should not be forced to come into the Union 'shorn of her beams.'"

Prentice, by contrast, could find but one exception to Clay's consistent opposition to slavery (the murder trial

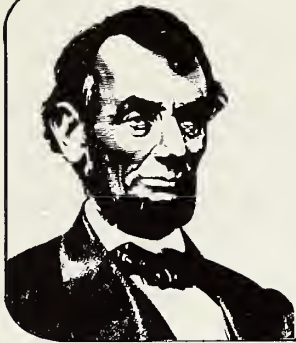
noted previously). Clay's political career commenced with his advocating a provision for gradual emancipation in the campaign to revise Kentucky's constitution in 1797. In this effort, Clay failed, but as a lawyer Clay volunteered to act as counsel "Whenever a slave brought an action at law for his liberty." Clay advocated colonization of freed Negroes in Africa as an anti-slavery measure. He knew of "the sufferings, the mental and bodily degradation, of the slave." Yet he also "spoke of the dangers to be apprehended from an insurrection of the blacks." The solution for the one problem was to free them, but for the other it was to send those freed away. The colonists would be missionaries of republicanism and Christianity in Africa.

To make Clay's anti-slavery career consistent, however, Prentice had to draw a subtly different picture of Clay's first reaction to the Missouri controversy. Prentice did not hide Clay's action. "From the first introduction of this unhappy topic into the house of representatives," he wrote, "Mr. Clay, who, at one rapid glance, foresaw all its fearful consequences, took a decided and active part against the proposed condition [that Missouri could enter the Union only by forbidding slavery]." Prentice merely said that Clay's arguments were different from those Van Deusen describes. Prentice claimed that Clay's objections were made strictly on constitutional grounds: "No man was more ready than he to embrace every practicable scheme for eradicating or mitigating the evil. Of this disposition, he had, from his boyhood, given frequent and abundant evidence; but he believed that the constitution had withheld from congress all power over the subject." Prentice made no mention of Clay's treading on ground that approached the pro-slavery argument (cf. Van Deusen's references to Clay's advocating geographical expansion and, more important, his argument that chattel slavery was better than wage slavery). For his own part, Prentice took the view which, when adopted by Seward and Lincoln more than twenty years later, outraged many advocates of compromise on the slavery question: the slavery question "will continue to convulse the country more or less, whilst the union or slavery remains."

George Prentice's view of Clay was special, one is tempted to say, for its New England-ness. He did make gestures towards frontier democracy, saying that Clay was a self-made man, that he was an enemy of aristocrats, and that he was a friend of the laboring man. Clay's economic policies "called up, as by the wand of enchantment, the lively village and the flourishing manufactory, upon half our mountain streams"; Prentice never suggested that they could create cities. But the ringing condemnation of Jackson's Indian policies (whatever suggested it, and it seems likely that it was political animosity to Andrew Jackson, who happened to have been a general) and the anti-slavery emphasis marked the book as reading for another constituency.

Whether Abraham Lincoln literally formed a part of that constituency we do not, as was argued in the first part of this article, know. Certainly Prentice created a Henry Clay from whom Lincoln could learn about Indian policy and with whom an anti-slavery Republican could be comfortable. Difficult as it is to find evidence whether Lincoln read a book or not, it is even harder to ascertain what he derived from what he read. In the case of biographies, it is especially difficult — if we are to believe William Herndon, who described Lincoln's reaction to a biography of Edmund Burke which Herndon had just purchased:

One morning Lincoln came into the office and, seeing the book in my hands, inquired what I was reading. I told him, at the same time observing that it was an excellent work and handing the book over to him. Taking it in his hand he threw himself down on the office sofa and hastily ran over its pages, reading a little here and there. At last he closed and threw it on the table with the exclamation, "No, I've read enough of it. It's like all the others. Biographies as generally written are not only misleading, but false. The author of this life of Burke makes a wonderful hero out of his subject. He magnifies his perfections . . . and suppresses his imperfections. . . . In most instances they [biographers] commemorate a lie, and cheat posterity out of the truth."



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A HAWK BECOMES A DOVE: Henry Clay's Speech on the Mexican War, November 13, 1847

On January 8, 1813, Henry Clay spoke in the House of Representatives in support of a bill to raise an additional twenty regiments of infantry for the war with England. It was one of Clay's more vituperative attacks on what he called "the parasites of opposition," and the speech said nothing of recruitment problems, availability of soldiers, casualties, or specific military needs. Suggesting that their previous opposition to Republican administrations had encouraged the enemy to make war on American independence, Clay accused the Federalists of "tacking with every gale, displaying the colors of every party, and of all nations, steady only in one unalterable purpose, to steer, if possible, into the haven of power." They were "for war, and no restrictions, when the administration is for peace," and they were "for peace and

restrictions, when the administration is for war." Thus he reduced the arguments used by the Federalists against the War of 1812 to hypocritical cant.

When, at length, foreign nations, perhaps, emboldened by the very opposition here made, refused to listen to the amicable appeals made, and repeated and reiterated by administration, to their justice and to their interests—when, in fact, war with one of them became identified with our independence and our sovereignty, and it was no longer possible to abstain from it, behold the opposition becoming the friends of peace and of commerce. They tell you of the calamities of war—its tragical events—the squandering away of your resources—the waste of the public treasure, and the spilling of innocent blood. They tell you that honor



BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA.

VIEW OF THE BATTLE GROUND AND BATTLE OF "THE ANGSTRECK" FOUGHT NEAR BUENA VISTA, MEXICO FEBRUARY 23RD 1847. (LOOKING S.W.E.S.T.)

Courtesy Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

FIGURE 1. Henry Clay's son was killed at the Battle of Buena Vista just nine months before Clay delivered his speech on the Mexican War. Ronnie C. Tyler in "The Mexican War: A Lithographic Record" (*Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXXVII [July, 1973], 1-84) says that Henry R. Robinson, the lithographer of the above print, sent Clay a copy of the print and later published Clay's letter of acknowledgment to advertise his art. The battle was also instrumental in bringing General Zachary Taylor the fame which launched him to the Whig presidential nomination in 1848, a nomination which Clay himself desired.

is an illusion!

Of one Federalist opponent who had criticized Thomas Jefferson, Clay said that, whereas "the name of Jefferson will be hailed as the second founder of the liberties of this people," the Federalist's name will "be consigned to oblivion, or . . . live only in the treasonable annals of a certain junto."

Thirty-four years later, on November 13, 1847, Henry Clay spoke to a mass meeting in Lexington, Kentucky on the subject of another war, the War with Mexico. Clay, now a Whig, was in much the same position that his Federalist opponents had occupied years earlier, for the War with Mexico was the work of President James K. Polk's Democratic administration. Moreover, Clay himself was seeking the haven of power. Although he had proclaimed retirement after his loss to Polk in the presidential election of 1844, the Sage of Ashland was still interested in the presidency and would soon make known his availability as Whig nominee for 1848.

Nevertheless, Clay's speech began with careful disclaimers of any political intent; he was "most solicitous that not a solitary word may fall from me, offensive to any party or person in the whole extent of the Union." After all, Clay was "in the Autumn of life" and felt "the frost of Age" (he was 70 years old). He came to speak only reluctantly. He feared for "the harmony, if not the existence, of our Union," and, "while a single pulsation of the human heart remains, it should, if necessary, be dedicated to the service of one's country."

Clay then launched forth into a catalogue of the calamities of war highly reminiscent of those which he denounced Federalists for reciting years before. "In the sacrifice of human life, and in the waste of human treasure, in its losses, and in its burdens," he said, "it affects both belligerent nations, and its sad effects of mangled bodies, of death, and of desolation, endure long after its thunders are hushed in peace. War unhinges society, disturbs its peaceful and regular industry, and scatters poisonous seeds of disease and immorality, which continue to germinate and diffuse their baneful influence long after it has ceased. Dazzling by its glitter, pomp, and pagentry, it begets a spirit of wild adventure and romantic enterprise, and often disqualifies those who embark in it, after their return from the bloody fields of battle, from engaging in the industrious and peaceful vocations of life."

The most startling statement in the speech was Clay's assertion that he would not have voted with most Whigs for the bill which raised 50,000 volunteers once the hostilities had commenced. That bill also contained in its preamble a statement "falsely attributing the commencement of the War to the act of Mexico."

I have no doubt [said Clay] of the patriotic motives of those who, after struggling to divest the bill of that flagrant error, found themselves constrained to vote for it. But I must say that no earthly consideration would have ever tempted or provoked me to vote for a bill, with a palpable falsehood stamped on its face. Almost idolizing truth as I do, I never, never could have voted for that bill.

Only fourteen Whigs had voted against the bill in the House in 1846; only two Whig Senators opposed the measure. Clay thus aligned himself, after the fact, with the most radical members of the Whig party, men who, for the most part, were noted for their anti-slavery convictions. He was endorsing the votes of John Quincy Adams, George Ashmun, Joseph Grinnel, Charles Hudson, and D.P. King of Massachusetts; Henry Cranston of Rhode Island; Erastus Culver of New York; John Strohm of Pennsylvania; Luther Severance of Maine; and Joshua Giddings, Columbus Delano, Joseph Root, David Tilden, and Joseph Vance of Ohio.

The "immortal fourteen" had been immediately compared to the Federalists who had opposed the War of 1812 and accused of treason. Clay noted the charge, and, as a fervent supporter of that earlier war, was in a good position to dismiss it:

The exceptional conduct of the Federal party, during the last British War, has excited an influence in the prosecution of the present War, and prevented a just discrimination between the two Wars. That was a War of National defence, required for the vindication of the National rights and honor, and demanded by the indignant voice of the people . . . It was a just War, and its great object, as announced at the time, was "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights," against the intolerable and oppressive acts of British power on the ocean. The justice of the War, far from being denied or controverted, was admitted by the Federal party, which only questioned it on considerations of

policy. Being deliberately and constitutionally declared, it was, I think, their duty to have given to it their hearty cooperation. But the mass of them did not. They continued to oppose and thwart it, to discourage loans and enlistments, to deny the power of the General Government to march the militia beyond our limits, and to hold a Hartford Convention, which, whatever were its real objects, bore the aspect of seeking the dissolution of the Union itself. They lost, and justly lost, the public confidence. But has not an apprehension of a similar fate, in a state of a case widely different, repressed a fearless expression of their real sentiments in some of our public men?

Clay was right. An extreme statement verifying his point had come from one-time Federalist Justin Butterfield. Asked whether he would oppose the Mexican War as he had the War of 1812, Butterfield replied: "No, by G-d, I opposed one war, and it ruined me, and hence forth I am for *War, Pestilence and Famine*." Clay claimed, however, that the Mexican War was "no War of Defence, but one unnecessary and of offensive aggression." Likewise, the Whig party, unlike the Federalist, had been so restrained in its opposition that "Far from interposing any obstacles to the prosecution of the War, if the Whigs in office are reproachable at all, it is for having lent too ready a facility to it, without careful examination into the objects of the War."

Clay's defense of the "immortal fourteen" and the Whig party in general from charges of Federalist defeatism or treason glossed over some complicating factors. When he claimed that the Federalists had opposed the war only on grounds of policy, Clay referred only to some Federalist arguments at certain stages in the conflict over the War of 1812. He no doubt referred to the Federalists' concern over the War's damage to shipping interests and to their argument that the United States should not fight England, whatever the injustice of England's treatment of American sailors and ships, because England was waging the world's battle against the French imperial despot Napoleon. He ignored the argument (that developed after the war began) that there was no cause for war once England had rescinded the obnoxious orders which had caused America's difficulties on the seas. Word that these had been rescinded reached America shortly after the declaration of war, but Clay in 1813 had simply countered that the War of 1812 was like the American Revolution, "an example of a war began [*sic*] for one object and prosecuted for another."

Clay also carefully avoided mentioning one of the objects for which the War of 1812 had been prosecuted: acquisition of Canada. Clay had discussed invading Canada before 1812, and he did not rely on the argument of the Revolutionary generation that the inhabitants of Canada would rise to greet their American liberators with open arms: after conquering Quebec, Clay speculated in 1811, "there would be no European enemy behind to be apprehended; but the people of the country might rise; and he warned gentlemen who imagined that the affections of the Canadians were with us against trusting too confidently on a calculation, the basis of which was treason." He had allowed himself to think expansively in 1817 too:

Every man who looks at the Constitution in the spirit to entitle him to the character of an American statesman, must elevate his views to the height which this nation is destined to reach in the rank of nations. We are not legislating for this moment only, or for the present generation, or for the present populated limits of these States; but our acts must embrace a wider scope—reaching northwestwardly to the Pacific, and more southwardly to the river [Rio Grande] del Norte. Imagine this extent of territory covered with sixty, or seventy, or an hundred millions of people.

After justifying the "immortal fourteen" and implying that other Whigs had been too hasty to support the war, Clay quickly shifted his ground: "Without indulging in an unnecessary retrospect and useless reproaches on the past, all hearts and heads should unite in the patriotic endeavor to bring it to a satisfactory close." Clay then advanced a bizarre constitutional argument that was defied by previous American experience. He said that Congress "must . . . possess the authority, at any time, to declare for what purposes it [a war] shall be farther prosecuted." All would have granted, no doubt, that the Senate had such power in a negative sense by being able to refuse consent to war-ending treaties which went too far or failed to go far enough. Congress, Clay asserted, could omit to "proclaim the objects for which it [war] was com-

menced or has since been prosecuted," and then "the President, . . . is, necessarily, left to his own judgment to decide upon the objects, to the attainment of which that force shall be applied." In the War of 1812, Clay had to admit, there had been no such direction, but the "whole world knew that it was a War waged for Free Trade and Sailors' Rights." The solution now was simple: "Let it [Congress] resolve, simply, that the War shall or shall not be a War of conquest; and, if a War of Conquest, what is to be conquered. Should a resolution pass, disclaiming the design of Conquest, peace would follow in less than sixty days; if the President would conform to his constitutional duty."

Clay made clear that, if the vote were for a war of conquest, it must not mean the conquest of all Mexico. Although he felt sure that the United States had the requisite power to conquer Mexico, Clay invoked the traditional arguments against wars of conquest. Historical example was against it: Caesar's and Napoleon's countries lost their liberties after wars of conquest sapped their strength. A standing army occupying a foreign country "and accustomed to trample upon the liberties of a foreign people" would become ready instruments of an ambitious chieftan who desired to bring about a coup d'état. A country based on liberty could not keep the Mexicans under military rule, and annexation was out of the question. "Does any considerate man believe it possible," asked Clay, "that two such immense countries, with territories of nearly equal extent, with population so incongruous, so different in race, in language, in religion and in laws, could be blended together in one harmonious mass, and happily governed by one common authority?"

Although Clay invoked the concept of racial differences to explain the poor wisdom of Mexican annexation, he was more careful than other Whigs to avoid implications that the Mexicans were a degraded or inferior race. The *National Intelligencer* would gag in December at the thought of adding "unknown" tribes and having "many-colored representatives" in the legislatures, and Virginia's *Richmond Whig* in 1846 had found "far more to dread from the acquisition of the debased population who have been summarily manufactured into American citizens, than to hope from the extension of our territorial limits." Clay used "race" to describe national pride, identity, and variety but eschewed ranking the different peoples. He put the greatest burden not on differences of race or color but on "the difficulty of combining and consolidating together, conquering and conquered nations."

After the lapse of eight hundred years [Clay explained with historical examples], during which the Moors held the conquest of Spain, the indomitable courage, perseverance and obstinacy of the Spanish race finally triumphed over and expelled the African invaders from the Peninsula. And even within our time, the colossal power of Napoleon, when at its loftiest height, was incompetent to subdue and subjugate the proud Castilian. And here in our own neighborhood, Lower Canada, which near one hundred years ago, after the conclusion of the seven year's War, was ceded by France to Great Britain, remains a foreign land in the midst of the British provinces, foreign in feelings and attachment, and foreign in laws, language and religion. And what has been the fact with poor, gallant, generous and oppressed Ireland? Centuries have passed since the overbearing Saxon overran and subdued the Emerald Isle . . . Insurrection and rebellion have been the order of the day; and yet, up to this time, Ireland remains alien in feeling, affection and sympathy toward the power which has so long borne her down. Every Irishman hates, with a mortal hatred, his Saxon oppressor.

Sympathy for Ireland had been much on Henry Clay's mind of late. Newspapers had given wide coverage to Clay's speech in New Orleans earlier in the year on the subject of relief of famine-stricken Ireland. It had been more than a run-of-the-mill public appearance because Clay had (privately) blamed foreign Catholic voters for having a hand in defeating him in 1844. Despite this and some alleged personal sympathy for the Native American movement, Clay apparently spurned suggestions that the Whigs cultivate nativist and anti-Catholic feelings. Clay's discussion of religious differences between Mexicans and Americans in his Lexington speech, though it clearly identified Catholicism as a stumbling block to annexation, was notable for its moderation and for its final complimentary remarks on the Pope:

[Clay compared Mexico and Ireland with England and America.] The Catholic Religion predominates in both the

former; the Protestant among both the latter. Religion has been the fruitful cause of dissatisfaction and discontent between the Irish and the English nations. Is there no reason to apprehend that it would become so between the people of the United States and those of Mexico, if they were united together? Why should we seek to interfere with them in their mode of worship of the common Saviour? We believe that they are wrong, especially in the exclusive character of their faith, and that we are right. They think that they are right and we wrong. What other rule can there be than to leave the followers of each religion to their own solemn convictions of conscientious duty toward God? Who but the great Arbiter of the Universe can judge in such a question? For my own part, I sincerely believe and hope, that those who belong to all the departments of the Great Church of Christ, if, in truth and purity, they conform to the doctrines which they profess, will ultimately secure an abode in those regions of bliss which all aim finally to reach. I think that there is no potentate in Europe, whatever his religion may be, more enlightened, or at this moment so interesting, as the liberal head of the Papal See.

Despite the conciliatory religious note which constituted a non sequitur in the remarks on the Pope (and which was, therefore, more probably a matter of domestic political relations to Catholic voters than of reasoned argument on the Mexican War), Clay did add the degrading remark that he feared Mexico's population was "Unprepared, . . . for the practical enjoyment of self-government." "Those, whom God and geography have pronounced shall live asunder," concluded Clay, "could never be permanently and harmoniously united together."

Aside from the practical difficulties from the standpoint of the United States's own interests, Clay did mention the moral problem. Everyone looked upon the partitioning of Poland as a "rapacious and detestable deed," and Clay feared that the United States did "not now stand well in the opinion of other parts of Christendom" because we too seemed "actuated by a spirit of rapacity, and an inordinate desire for territorial aggrandizement." Clay expressed a personal wish that the United States gain no Mexican territory at all from the contest, but he was willing to grant a little incidental expansion:

For one, I desire to see no part of her territory torn from her by war. Some of our people have placed their hearts upon the acquisition of the Bay of San Francisco in Upper California. To us, as a great maritime power, it might prove to be of advantage hereafter. . . . To Mexico, which can never be a great maritime power, it can never be of much advantage. If we can obtain it by fair purchase for a just equivalent, I should be happy to see it so acquired. As whenever the War ceases, Mexico ought to be required to pay the debts due our citizens [incurred before the war and defaulted], perhaps an equivalent for the Bay may be found in that debt, our Government assuming to pay to our citizens whatever portion of it may be applied to that object. But it should form no motive in the prosecution of the War, which I would not continue a solitary hour for the sake of that harbor.

Clay was more willing to tolerate the sort of expansion the North desired than the sort the South desired. He insisted that the United States "disavow, in the most positive manner, any desire on our part to acquire any foreign territory whatever, for the purpose of introducing slavery into it." Here again, as in his apology for the "immortal fourteen," Clay was approaching the more radical elements in the Northern wing of the Whig party who claimed that the Mexican War was a pro-slavery plot to gain more territory for slave expansion and eventually more slave-state representatives in the Congress. Yet Clay merely *approached* their position; he did not adopt it. He added immediately: "I do not know that any citizen of the United States entertains such a wish." Nor did he mention specifically the Wilmot Proviso, which would have forbidden slavery in any territory acquired from Mexico as a result of the war. To say that the United States should "disabuse the public mind in any quarter of the Union of the impression, if it anywhere exists, that a desire for conquest is cherished for the purpose of propagating or extending Slavery" was not precisely to say that slavery would not be allowed in anything acquired by conquest.

Having approached the Joshua Giddingses of the Northern wing of his party, Clay very quickly repaired his fences in the rear. Although he had "ever regarded Slavery as a great evil, a wrong, for the present, I fear, an irremediable wrong, to its unfortunate victims," he was, of course, no abolitionist. More

than that, however, Clay hinted that he might not be looking forward to any kind of abolition, no matter how gradual in the Deep South. "In States where the slaves outnumber the whites, as in the case with several, the blacks could not be emancipated and invested with all the rights of freedom, without becoming the governing race in those States. Collisions and conflicts between the two races would be inevitable, and after shocking scenes of rapine and carnage, the extinction or expulsion of the blacks would certainly take place." Clay added, "In the State of Kentucky, near fifty years ago, I thought the proportion of slaves, in comparison with the whites, was so inconsiderable that we might safely adopt a system of gradual emancipation that would ultimately eradicate this evil in our State." What was one to infer from this? The Southerner *could* infer that Clay did not believe in immediate emancipation *anywhere* and that he believed in gradual emancipation only where blacks constituted a small part of the population. Clay did finally state that slavery had "continued, . . . for a period of more than a century and a half, and it may require an equal or longer lapse of time before our country is entirely rid of the evil." Clay still held out that ultimate ideal of a free country, but "ultimate" in this speech meant almost a *minimum* of 150 years and an open-ended maximum.

Every authority agrees that Clay's speech on the Mexican War was, as biographer Glyndon Van Deusen puts it, "really a bid for the nomination" for president in 1848. Yet none has analyzed the speech to see to whom it was a bid. Clearly, he was reaching out to the Northern wing of the Whig party and to the more radical members of that wing. No doubt as Clay read the situation in the autumn of 1847, the Zachary Taylor presidential boom was faltering. He must have surmised that it foundered on the rocks of Northern discontent with a Southern-sponsored slave-owning candidate whose views on slavery were not widely known. Clay would reach out to that constituency without totally losing his Southern moorings. Or perhaps he may even have realized that it would divorce him from the South more than ever. In a confidential letter to Horace Greeley, Clay suggested that the speech would make "me a Western man (I protest being considered as a *Southern* man) with Northern principles," but this, of course, was what Greeley as an anti-slavery Northern Whig wanted to hear. New York's William Seward knew the purpose of the speech. In letters to his wife he said of Clay's speech that it was "surpassingly beautiful and will affect many minds. But it is too late." More to the point, Seward said, "Mr. Clay's notices of slavery and of the extension of slavery will not satisfy the North."

Whig Congressman-elect Abraham Lincoln was in Lexington when Clay gave his speech, and many historians have assumed that he would not have missed this, his only chance to hear his "beau ideal of a statesman" speak in person. There is no direct evidence that Lincoln did hear the speech, however. When he commended "Mr. Clay's eloquence" in his eulogy on Clay in 1852, Lincoln asserted that "those who heard Mr. Clay, never failed to be moved by it, or ever afterwards, forgot the impression." Yet, Lincoln did not say that he had had that privilege himself, and there were doubtless many reminiscences of hearing Clay's speeches in print by that time.

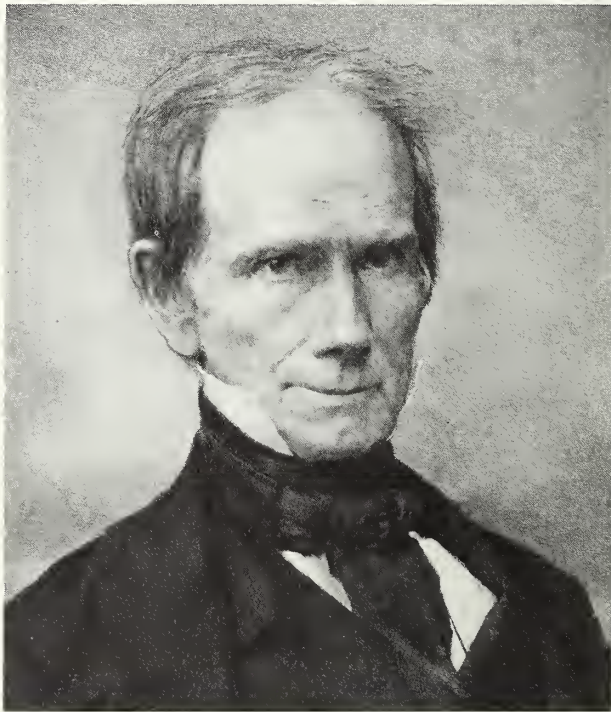
Nor did Clay's speech on the Mexican War notably influence Lincoln's famous speech in opposition to that war. Lincoln attacked the Mexican War in the House on January 12, 1848, but he confined himself largely to the issue of aggression. His concern was with the legal border of Texas and, thus, with the question whether hostilities had really begun on American soil. Lincoln scrupulously avoided even Clay's cautious intimations about the motive behind the war. Lincoln did say in a suggestive tone that President Polk had had "some strong motive—what, I will not stop now to give my opinion concerning," but he never mentioned slavery in the speech. Clay addressed his speech primarily to the question of war aims and attacked the movement to acquire all of Mexico at great length. By the time Lincoln delivered his speech, Polk had stated "that the separate national existence of Mexico, shall be maintained," and he therefore had less reason to attack the movement Clay had attacked. Still, Lincoln said little of the legitimate or illegitimate purposes of the war and mentioned some of the various objectives considered only to show that Polk was confused and had no clear purpose.

By February of 1848, if not before, Lincoln had embraced a

view of the proper objectives of the war. By that time Lincoln had endorsed the "defensive-line strategy" according to which American forces were to assume a stationary position along the Rio Grande to the southern border of New Mexico and then along the thirty-second parallel. This not only would establish the Rio Grande as the Texas border, but, as Lincoln said, "we shall probably be under a sort of necessity of taking some territory" but none "extending so far South, as to enlarge and aggravate [*sic*] the distracting question of slavery."

Ironically, the defensive-line strategy was largely the brain child of John C. Calhoun, with whom Lincoln was not often in agreement, but Lincoln claimed that Zachary Taylor "declared for, and, in fact originated, the defensive line policy." Herein lies an irony in all the concern over Lincoln's relationship to Clay's speech. Whether he heard it or not, it failed to have the desired effect on him, for Lincoln was supporting the movement to make Zachary Taylor the Whig presidential nominee at least as early as December 10, 1847.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Preparation of the above analysis of Henry Clay's speech would have been impossible without the aid of the following works: Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *The Life of Henry Clay* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1937); George Rawlings Poage, *Henry Clay and the Whig Party* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936); Samuel Eliot Morison, Frederick Merk, and Frank Friedel, *Dissent in Three American Wars* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970); James F. Hopkins, ed., *The Papers of Henry Clay, Volume I: The Rising Statesman, 1797-1814* ([Lexington]: University of Kentucky Press, 1959); John H. Schroeder, *Mr. Polk's War: American Opposition and Dissent, 1846-1848* ([Madison]: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973); and G.S. Borit, "A Question of Political Suicide: Lincoln's Opposition to the Mexican War," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, LXVII (February, 1974), 79-100.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 2. Henry Clay as he looked about three years after he delivered his speech against the Mexican War in Lexington, Kentucky. Though seventy when he delivered the speech, Clay made a bid for the presidential nomination the next year and was elected Senator when he was seventy-two. At seventy-three he played a prominent role in bringing about the Compromise of 1850. He was seventy-five when he died in Washington, D.C.

HOME OF HENRY CLAY - LEXINGTON 28, KENTUCKY

DINING ROOM

Portraits

1. Henry Clay - painted by Jouett
2. Lucretia Hart Clay - wife of Henry Clay - painted by Frazer
3. Henry Clay, Jr. - seventh child of Henry Clay - painted by Frazer
4. Julia Prather Clay - wife of Henry Clay, Jr. - painted by Frazer
5. Ann Clay - grand daughter of Henry Clay - painted by Irwin
6. Major Henry Clay McDowell - husband of Ann Clay - painted by Irwin
7. Nannette Smith - niece of Mrs. Henry Clay - painted by Jouett

Furnishings

- Velvet curtains which were stored in the attic at Ashland for forty years
- Sideboard - belonged to Nannette McDowell Bullock
- Three tables - over 200 years old - belonged to Ann Clay McDowell
- China - bought in France - belonged to Mrs. Henry Clay - used for ice cream
- Silver - a wedding gift to Ann Clay from Dr. Mercer of New Orleans

DRAWING ROOM

- Two pairs of gold brocaded satin draperies brought from Lyons, France by Henry Clay in 1814, after he signed the Treaty of Ghent. They were used in the drawing room at Ashland from 1814 until 1864, then were stored until April 1950.
- Marble bust of Henry Clay by Joel T. Hart
- 9. Portrait of Dr. William Adair McDowell - father of Major Henry Clay McDowell
- 10. Portrait of Maria Hawkins Harvie, wife of Dr. William Adair McDowell
- Campaign banner used by Henry Clay in the race for President of the United States in 1844.
- Carved rosewood case that belonged to Henry Clay
- One of a pair of French sofas brought from France by Henry Clay after he signed the Treaty of Ghent in 1814
- Gold-bronze candle sticks that belonged to Henry Clay

LIBRARY

- Paneled in light and dark walnut - Chess table used by Henry Clay

NANNETTE McDOWELL BULLOCK ROOM

- Restored in memory of Nannette McDowell Bullock - great grand daughter of Henry Clay who with Judge Samuel M. Wilson founded the Henry Clay Memorial Foundation and who in her will made possible the opening of Ashland

NURSERY

- Sheraton child's bed that belonged to Henry Clay, Jr.

HENRY CLAY BED ROOM

- Silk quilt-made for Henry Clay by "The Ladies of Philadelphia"
- Deer skin trunk which Henry Clay took with him on stage coach trips between Lexington and Washington
- Coat worn by Henry Clay when he signed the Treaty of Ghent
- Hat box used by Henry Clay
- Robe worn by Henry Clay
- Ruby red velvet dress worn by Mrs. Henry Clay
- Taffeta dress worn by Mrs. Henry Clay, Jr.

OFFICE

- Display case containing trophies and articles that belonged to Henry Clay and members of his family
- Two carved chairs used by Henry Clay
- Engraving of the original house in which Henry Clay lived from 1811 until his death in 1852

Clay Henry

July 27 - 1812

Resolved that Henry Clay, Esq be
added to the committee appointed to
obtain information whether a gathering
of talents and reputation can be
procured to serve as a President of
the University. (Dr E with memorial by com
after 1813) 2000 years

Henry Clay, memorial included in the book



CLAY, HENRY

DRAWER

9

WHIG LEADER

